



Comparisons and name-calling in 21st Century political satire: Late-Night shows under the Trump Era

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1. INTRODUCTION

Satire has been an interest of mine since the terrorist attacks of November 2015 in Paris. John Oliver, a British satirist settled in the US made a segment on his show *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* dedicated to those attacks. His take on those attacks and the way he treated it made me and millions of people laugh, at a time when laughing was unthinkable. This video and the ones that followed sparked an interest on the topic of satire. More specifically, it made me wonder how language could turn a dark and worrisome topic into comic material without losing the seriousness of the subject. However, a pivotal moment in satire in the US was the election of Donald J. Trump as the 45th President of the United States. The treatment of his out-of-place campaign, his TV personality and his controversial victory over the electoral college could make and unmake satirists. Furthermore, the way they – the satirists – would treat his election and all the following events would consolidate their brands. Non-political show-hosts as Jimmy Fallon or James Corden¹ took on a political undertone to their monologues without however falling into satire. Several prominent political events and controversies surrounding Donald Trump and his administration paved his term since. At time of writing the event picked to take a closer look at satire in America is only one of the first scandals on a long list of shame. However, at the time, this was a controversial event that led to a critical media frenzy. What will be referred to as "the event" throughout this paper is the dismissal of FBI director James Comey² on May 7th 2017. The media frenzy around the event was the result of what but also of how and why. It was also the beginning of a two-year-long investigation: the "Russian Probe". The intent in the termination of James Comey's employment was the end of the investigation. Dismissing the FBI director is a presidential power, however, none before Donald Trump had used it. The goal of this dissertation is therefore the study of satire during that week.

"Satire" was too broad of a field. Its close relationship with humour and in the case of talk-shows, verbal humour is the main focus here. Those two notions – humour and satire - will be intertwined as the backbone of this dissertation. Within verbal humour, some structures seem more prominent than others when using language. Comparative systems are favoured tools by most satirists considered when establishing the corpus. Satire often treats serious and complex topic. Satirists use comparisons to make them more accessible to the general public. Comparisons as mentioned in this work's title: *Comparisons and name-calling in 21st Century political satire: Late-Night shows*

1 Jimmy Fallon and James Corden are respectively the hosts of *The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon* on NBC and *The Late Late Show with James Corden* on CBS. Both shows are entertainment-based shows with little to no-political content.

2 FBI director appointed by Barack Obama in 2013, James Comey also served as FBI director under George W. Bush and is a Republican.

under the Trump Era", are namely comparative structures that include a source (what the object is compared to), a target (the object of the comparisons) and comparable elements. Name-calling is here a comparative structure, simple or elaborate, with the target usually being implicit. More often than not, the target of name-calling relies on background knowledge. As verbal humour is the central theme here, the comparative systems taken into account will be the ones with humorous intent.

1.1 Corpus data

There are two corpora used in this paper. The primary corpus will serve as a bank for statistical purposes and the main sources of examples used in this work. It is, therefore, the backbone of this research. It counts ten videos from 6 to 22 minutes long. Eighty-four examples of comparisons and name-calling extracted from this collection served as statistical data. Under 30 went through a pre-established protocol of analysis. There are four speakers on three different TV channels: Bill Maher and John Oliver on Home Box Office (HBO), Samantha Bee on Turner Broadcasting System (TBS) and Stephen Colbert on Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS).

The time frame – as mentioned earlier – is the dismissal of FBI director James Comey. The dismissal made the news on May 7th and the subsequent days were also packed with related news. John Oliver, at the beginning of his piece on the event titled "Stupid Watergate" describes the week as followed: "The last seven days have been absolutely insane! So much so that by Friday night it may have broken Anderson Cooper."³ The selection process was influenced by that video, for it was the first one watched about the event. It also is the longest, 22 minutes-long. The videos that were mentioning events that occurred amid James Comey's dismissal but were not linked to the event are not part of this collection. The events following James Comey's termination as FBI director and as direct consequences are part of the topic. The event also pruned several journalists and satirists to compare it to another scandal: the Watergate scandal (1972 – 1974) that pushed President Richard Nixon (1969 – 1974) to resign amid impeachment proceedings.

A thorough protocol help select the speakers. First and foremost, they had to be liberals in their belief, therefore opposed to President Trump. In the US, they had to be left-wingers. The content of the show or a portion of the show had to be highly political and be satire and not mock-satire nor mocknews. The definition of satire is one of the main focuses of this dissertation and will not be detailed here. Mock-satire and mock-news have that in common that they are purely humorous and do not comment on thoroughly researched topic. They usually consist of isolated jokes or a collection of isolated jokes. They are purely made to entertain and not inform. The speakers also

3 Anderson Cooper: CNN news anchor praised for his professionalism

had to be hosts of their own shows and not merely "correspondants" as they are dubbed in satire. Rachel Paris of *The Mash Report* and Jordan Klepper of *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* did not conform to this criteria. A further elimination process came from perspective. The dismissal of the FBI director is a purely American problem. Therefore, all the shows had to air on American TV channels – network or cable – this way the observations would come from within the country. However, the speaker did not need to be American but mainly a resident. Nish Kumar host of *The Mash Report* and Russel Howard host of *the Russel Howard Hour*, are both based in the UK and did not make it into the list. John Oliver, a British national (who took on dual citizenship since then) and Samantha Bee, a Canadian national made the cut for their shows *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (HBO)* and *Full Frontal with Samantha Bee (TBS)* are both based in the US. The fifth criterion was that of availability for an international audience via Youtube, on official channels during that week, or mentioning that week. It was not the case for Seth Meyers of *The Late Show with Seth Meyers*. And last, but not least, they all had to use both comparisons and name-calling to a certain extent. Trevor Noah, host of *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* was on the original short-list but lost his spot for he rarely uses comparisons and did not use name-calling (up until the pandemic that is).

One could wonder about the use of studying name-calling and comparisons. The beginning of an answer could be in proportion of words used within the corpus. The ten videos have a cumulative total of 11768 words⁴. 17,9% of those words are part of comparisons and 2,2% are parts of name-calling occurrences. In our corpus here, narrative jokes with comparative systems average at 26 words per utterance (going up to 36 terms on average in the case of John Oliver and Stephen Colbert) and name-calling average at nine words going down to six words on average in the case of Samantha Bee. There is also a disparity in the use of those two devices. The use of comparative structures makes up for 18% of Bill Maher words but only 13% of Stephen Colbert's. Name-calling makes up for 9% of Stephen Colbert's words but merely 1% of John Oliver's word count. An explanation as to why the discrepancy is part of the object of the presented research.

As for the examples selected to be analysed the same protocol was in use:

1. Identification of both the speaker and the target of the joke (or "butt" of the joke);
2. Delimitation of both the set-up and the punchline when possible;
3. Detection of the impact of the text on the audience taking into account the ratio information/entertainment;
4. Detailed depiction of the context of the utterance;
5. Syntactic analysis of the segment;

⁴ cf. Appendix B for all statistical data on the corpus

6. Research on the references used (people, event, pop culture items...)
7. Parallel between the source and the target;
8. Determination of connector between the source and the target (when possible)
9. Identification of the device at play (comparison, analogy, metaphor...)

The elements collected thus will serve as data, and only the features relevant to the argument at hand will figure in the paragraph concerned.

The secondary corpus contains examples extracted from videos outside of the time frame, or from shows or speakers that did not fit the primary corpus criteria. However, they are all from US-based satirical shows or entertainment show with a strong political undertone. Several of those examples will be used as quotes. Only one, example (4) is the object of a thorough explanation.

1. 2 Secondary sources and theoretical background

Satire and humour are often treated as separate entities or as complementary ones: satire serves as an example of humour and humour as a component of satire. No theory nor works that I could find combine the two as equal forces. No one theory will be used here on satire, for there are none that pertain to the language used. The main goal here would be to define satire and the characteristics that pertain to our corpus. One book, however, can be mentioned here as important when analysing satire. A book on satire that relates to early 21st Century satire. *Is satire saving our nation? Mockery and American Politics* by Sophia McClennen and Remy M. Maisel describes the rise of satire in the post 9/11 era.

Research is a little more scarce on humour and mostly verbal humour. The main theory used today is that of the Semantic Script Theory of Humour (SSTH) coined by Victor Raskin. Raskin's theory is the first articulated and developed theory of verbal humour. Salvatore Attardo, along with Victor Raskin, further expanded and developed the SSTH into the General Theory of Verbal Humour (GTVH).⁵ The term "joke" has two definitions; a general one: short text aiming at making people laugh, and a structural one. The SSTH and the GTVH concern themselves with the structural joke. Some of the principles and the rules of those theories can not apply to this corpus. Both SSTH and GTVH attempt to highlight the overlapping of two opposing scripts in the same text. A joke, is, therefore, according to those theories, the opposition of two scripts. A script is a structured configuration of knowledge. The SSTH is too broad, the GTVH too specific. Indeed it takes into account six different knowledge resources (KR): script opposition, logical mechanism, situation, target, narrative strategy and language.⁶ Those two theories can only be applied to texts written as

⁵ Deila Chiaro. *The Language of Jokes in the Digital Age*. N.p.: Routledge, 2018. Print.

⁶ Graeme Ritchie. *The Linguistic Analysis of Jokes*. London: Routledge, 2014. Print.

jokes and not other texts written as humorous tools. Two books by Deila Chiaro: *The language of jokes analysing the verbal play*, coupled with the work by Graeme Ritchie *The linguistic analysis of jokes*, explore the SSTH and the GTVH and their applicabilities to jokes.

1.3 Structure of the dissertation

Each talk-show host has a personality, a view-point. Here they use the same devices. However, they do not use them the same way or to the same extent. Some will favour name-calling others comparisons; some will prefer complex structures when others will opt for simple ones. The main goal of this present work is to identify criteria specific to each speaker. Comparisons and name-calling are the tools of that identification. This dissertation will attempt to establish differences and commonality among the four speakers of the corpus. The association of satirical devices, language, narrative strategy and the humorous tool will help to set a profile for each speaker.

This paper is in three parts, each containing chapters in a total of 11 (including the introduction). The first part from chapter 2 to 5 will be broad. Chap 2 will treat several of the theories relating to metaphoric language, comparisons and name-calling and their use in political satire. Chapter 3 will attend the language of humour and lay down the view of humour as a whole, its specificities and its limits regarding our corpus here. Chap 4 will reveal the role of satire in today's America and the main characteristics of satire, through the study of jokes and comment extracted from the primary or the secondary corpora. Chap 5, and the last one of this first part, will explore the differences between political satire and political news, in terms of visuals, and how those differences feed the jokes used on satirical shows.

The second part, chapters 6 and 7, will offer a macro-analysis of the corpus. The analysis will focus on the study of the themes used the most in the corpus regarding comparisons (Chap 6) and the satirical tools used and made apparent in those examples. Chapter 7 will focus on the simple structures used in the corpus.

The third part, chapters 7 through 10 will explore the more complex comparative systems. Chapter 8 will explore complex comparative structures. Chapter 9 will explore the "childlike" aspect of some comparisons and name-calls or the recourse to the world of childhood as a way to lessen the blow. Chapter 10 will take a closer look at the creativity of verbal humour.

Each chapter will mention categories for each speaker in each subject treated. The conclusion will establish each profile following the criteria established in each chapter.

2. METAPHORIC LANGUAGE

Cognitive linguistics approach to language is that meaning is essentially conceptualisation. One of the fundamental construal mechanisms that proves this point is comparative structures. The study of comparisons and comparative devices has been the study of various fields as cognitive linguistics, psychology and even sociology.⁷ In other words, how experience is framed is a matter of conceptualisation. It depends on how the speaker and hearer communicate about and in the world. It also depends on shared concepts. SSTH relies on one principle: the duplicity of language. A joke is more often than not, two concepts explained through the same terms. The third chapter treats the type of language needed for humour but also the kind of cognitive linguistics principles necessary for a text, especially a humorous one, to be understood. This second chapter counts three parts, each exploring a specific aspect of human language and interaction. First, the world is expressed through language by way of concept or frame. Humour relies on the shift from one of those frames to another. SSTH depends heavily on the profile/frame hypothesis. Following this hypothesis, humour conjures up the imagination and an extended set of beliefs. A second part, on humorous bisociation and the suspension of disbelief, treats this phenomenon. Humour is also a two-way street, and demand some fundamental cooperation from both speaker and hearer for a joke to "work". Presuppositions and implicatures are examples of this cooperation. The third part will explore these aspects and also introduce Grice's cooperative principle. The introduction to Grice's cooperative principle will serve as a transition to the third chapter.

2.1 Encyclopedic meaning in the profile/frame relationship

The central linguistic concept on which relies the main theory of verbal humour – SSTH – is frame semantics as stated by William Croft and D.A. Cruse in “Frames, domains, spaces: the organization of conceptual structure” from *Cognitive linguistics*. It relies on the semantics of understanding in contrast to truth-conditional semantics. It opposes a profile and a base. The profile refers to the concept symbolized by the word in question. The base is that knowledge or conceptual structure that is presupposed by the profiled concept. Langacker also uses the term domain for the base. Translation can highlight the importance of frame: “eat” in English can be translated by “essen” or “fressen” in German. The former relates to humans and the latter to animals. “Fressen” can be used for humans. Still, it is then pejorative. The same goes with the French translations of the word

⁷ Victoria Rubin “Fake News or Truth? Using Satirical Cues to Detect Potentially Misleading News.” Proceedings of the Second Workshop on Computational Approaches to Deception *Detection*, 2016, doi:10.18653/v1/w16-0802.

“mouth”: “bouche” for humans and “gueule” for animals. The *Frame/domain* theory is also essential when talking about comparisons and humour. This principle is believed to be the foundation of the SSTH and the GTVH.

One profile can belong to one base; for example, the word LARK belongs to BIRD. One profile can also belong to two bases as MOUSE belongs to both ANIMAL and TECHNOLOGY. However, two profiles together belonging to two different bases can create a third base when combined: BANANA and REPUBLIC belong to two bases; still, when combined, they evoke a third base to which BANANA REPUBLIC belongs. Deriving from the study of comparative structure is the study of conceptual metaphor, through metaphor theory. It is the conceptualisation of one domain in terms of another. The play on the shift from one frame to the other creates humour as in the following examples from Bill Maher:

- (1) Would you like a little banana with your Republic?
- (2) Because we now all live in Americaragua.

The idea of the frame is pushed further.

The neologism "Americaragua" is a blend between the words America and Nicaragua. America is a continent, however in this context it refers to one country in particular. In common vernacular, it comes to represent the United States of America. Still, it is peculiar to see this formula used by a left-wing American; it is usually English speakers outside of the American continent⁸ or right-wing Americans⁹ that use the metonymy America. "Nicaragua" is the name of a South American Country, and a dictatorship. Interesting choice for a word-blend, for Nicaragua, is already in America. The phonological similarities could have also decided this choice between the two words. For the second example, the phrase "Banana Republic" is broken into two parts. The inconsistency – which creates humour - resides in the fact that "banana" is suggested as a side dish for an element that is not a dish, but rather an idea or a political reality: a Republic. The Incongruity resolution resides in the relationship between the words "banana" and "Republic". For the phrase "Banana Republic" has a significance that differs from that of "banana" and "Republic" taken separately. The phrase "Banana Republic" refers to a particular type of dictatorship. In political science, the phrase describes a politically unstable country with an economy dependent upon the exportation of a limited-resource product, such as bananas or minerals. It is often seen as a dictatorship usually from South America or the Pacific Ocean, both related in a way to the US. In both cases, the parallel is

⁸ British or Australians for example

⁹ As is exemplified by Donald Trump's campaign slogan: Make America Great Again or MAGA

made between the US and a South American dictatorship. There is therefore a comparison between the "land of liberty" and a tyranny: a seemingly state-run press crawling with cults of personality (Fox News) and the dictator's close circle covering for him (Trump's senior staff). This parallel is made possible by the abilities of our minds to construe meaning through concept. The frame/domain hypothesis can explain this phenomenon.

The parallels made here are possible for hearers without asking too much of them, especially when confronted with the facts. However, sometimes the metaphor is pushed even further as we will see in the second part of this chapter through the study of humour bisociation and the suspension of disbelief.

2.2 Humorous bisociation and the suspension of disbelief

The term bisociation, in literature, designate the action of associating one idea with two different contexts. It, therefore, creates a double meaning. Humour, as detailed by the SSTH, lies in the shift of one meaning to another which creates incongruity. The incongruity is an absurdity within the text. Its resolution allows for humour to occur. In humour studies, this is the Incongruity Resolution model (IR) of which the SSTH is a theory. Humorous bisociation differs from metaphorical conceptualisation in the profiling of domain boundaries. Metaphor fuse the target and the source through what they have in common when humour separate them.¹⁰ However, in the present corpus metaphor and comparative structures are used as humorous devices. The combination of a comparative system and humorous bisociation creates an intricate humorous item. The humour then does not lie in the differences between the two elements, but in the similarities of those two items. Consider the following example by Stephen Colbert and its illustration:

(3) former national security adviser – and Sam the Eagle cosplayer – Michael Flynn

10 V. Rubin "Fake News or Truth? Using Satirical Cues to Detect Potentially Misleading News." Proceedings of the Second Workshop on Computational Approaches to Deception *Detection*, 2016, doi:10.18653/v1/w16-0802.



Fig. 1: Michael Flynn and Sam the Eagle¹¹

The target of the comparison here is Michael Flynn. Flynn was a senior staffer at the White House at the time of James Comey's dismissal. He is a three-star general that President Donald J. Trump hired as National Security Adviser. This hiring was controversial for previous White House Officials, including former President Barack Obama, warned him about Flynn's contacts with Russian Intelligence. The source of the comparison is Sam the Eagle. Sam is a character from the musical and humorous *Muppet Show*.¹² It is a puppet representing a bald eagle – US's national bird – and, as a character, he tries to uphold the other characters of the muppet show to high standards. The target and the source are at first glance, very different: a three-star general and a fictional character portrayed by a puppet. The two together, linguistically and physically, force the audience to see the similarities. Suspension of disbelief is then necessary for the joke to be a joke instead of an incoherent string of text. The parallel between the two is first and foremost physical. Staging made it apparent by having the photos side by side. The choice of the photos is also essential; both personas are in a similar position which forces the resemblance onto the viewer. The similarities also lie on the values they represent: conservative America and patriotism. One is the national bird, stern and strict. The other is a three-star general in a country that values his military over education or health (judging by the annual military budget compared to that of education or health). Michael Flynn was at the time used as an example of integrity and Sam, the Eagle prominent role in *The*

¹¹ *Even Comey's Firing Was All About Trump*. Perf. Stephen Colbert. *Youtube*. Columbia Broadcasting System, 10 May 2017. Web. 17 May 2020. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNoP8cmuFU0&t=124s>>.

¹² *The Muppet Show*. The series itself started in 1969 and when through several interruptions and periods since then. A version of the show is still ongoing today.

Muppet Show is to hold his companions to a higher standard of morality. However, for there to be humour, a ridiculous comparison is not necessary here.

The term "cosplayer" puts a certain distance between Sam the Eagle and Michael Flynn. Cosplay is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as follows: "the action or pastime of dressing up in costume, especially as a character from anime, manga or video games." The use of the noun "cosplay" then states that Michael Flynn is not as Sam Eagle but dresses as that character. If the word had been "a human Sam the Eagle" then the comparison would be complete. Still, it is not. "Cosplayer" suggest an illusion, an aspiration to be like Sam the Eagle, representing him while being something different. In a way, Michael Flynn is playing a role as a cosplayer would, and his role is that of a fictional character portrayed by a puppet. At the time, people opposed to Trump would view his whole administration, including Flynn, like toys in the hand of their puppet master. The suspension of disbelief allows the audience to imagine Michael Flynn wanting to dress as Sam the Eagle, and also the similarities between the two. Humorous bisociation enables the mind to create a parallel between them that can be humorous and profound at the same time, thus making satirical humour. Both bisociation and suspension of disbelief demand cooperation from the audience. Collaboration is necessary for language tools as presupposition and implicature.

2.3 Presupposed messages, implicature and Grice's cooperative principle

The cooperative principle is the concept of there being an expected amount of information provided in conversation. It is just one aspect of the more general idea that people involved will cooperate. It is known as the cooperative principle.¹³ The scholar Paul Grice coined the phrase in an article entitled "Logic and conversation" in 1975. Following the cooperative principle, some tools are useful to analyze an utterance. The elements necessary here are semantic presuppositions, pragmatic presuppositions, implicatures and particularized conversational implicatures.

It is essential to first distinguish between presuppositions and implicatures. A presupposition is something the speaker assumes to be the case before making an utterance. Implicature is what is inferred by the text. Speakers, not sentences, have presuppositions. Sentences, not speakers have implicatures.¹⁴

To go even further consider the following example:

13 George Yule. "Presupposition and Entailment." *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford U., 2014. Print.

14 G. Yule. "Cooperation and Implicature." *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford U., 2014. Print.

(4) COLIN JOST: My Irish ancestors certainly didn't come here because they were the best and the brightest. They came here because God took their potatoes away. And now, after decades of hard work they have dozens of potatoes literally. And that's progress. Back to you Michael.

MICHAEL CHE: At least they had a choice.

This example is from a section of the satirical show *Saturday Night Live*¹⁵ called *Weekend Update*, a mock-news segment. There are two hosts: a caucasian from Irish ancestry by the name of Colin Jost and an African-American by the name of Michael Che. A presupposed message is a piece of information that is inherent in the formation of the utterance. It constitutes the background of the statement. There are two main types of presuppositions: semantic and pragmatic. A semantic presupposition is given information, it is embedded in an utterance or phrase and remains true even if the statement is negated. The information is presupposed. A pragmatic supposition is something that is implied by the utterance (but is coherently true). The information is implied. Considering the first sentence: "My Irish ancestors certainly didn't come here because they were the best and the brightest." This sentence presupposes that the speaker's ancestors were Irish and implies that they left a place "there" to come "here".

Implicatures, englobe all the pieces of information that are likely to be conveyed by an utterance. Their actuality depends on the context of the statement. A speaker will always be able to deny having given such a message. There are two main types of implicatures: conversational implicatures and particularized implicatures.¹⁶ Conversational implicatures can be inferred by the words used in a sentence. They are not as context dependant as particularized conversational implicatures. They implicate an information. In the same sentence as mentioned earlier the negation of the "best and the brightest" involves that Jost's ancestors were not high on the social scale, they were probably even low on it judging by the sarcastic tone employed in the sentence.

Particularized conversational implicature are the most common. They depend entirely on the context of the occurrence. An illustration to that is Michael Che's response to Colin Jost's utterance. "At least they had a choice." The word "ancestors" is key to understanding the implicature in Che's declaration. As mentioned before, Michael Che is African-American. The pronoun "they" in his utterance is the pro-form that stands for "ancestors". He then compares Jost's ancestors to his own: the Irish who fled the Great Famine of the 1840s (*took their potatoes away*), and the Africans sent to America as slaves. The allusion to slavery is apparent for those familiar with Michael Che's skin

¹⁵ *Saturday Night Live* is a sketch-based comedy show on the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) since 1975

¹⁶ G. Yule. "Cooperation and Implicature." *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford U., 2014. Print.

colour and rhetoric on both black history and race relations in the US. He could, of course, deny the reference to slavery, for he did not mention it in his utterance.

Presuppositions and Implicatures are paramount in humour for it is their manipulation that creates comedy.

2.4 Summary

In this chapter, we saw that verbal humour does not rely on the words used; it depends on what those words mean. Several theories can explain this. Frame semantics and the profile/base hypothesis can explain how a simple phrase like "Banana Republic" or a word blend like "Americaragua" can conjure up in the mind of an audience the idea of the United States being some third-world dictatorship run as a business and not a country. Humorous bisociation combined with the suspension of disbelief can turn the comparison of a three-star general and a puppet eagle into a thorough and researched criticism of Donald J Trump's senior staff and their inability to conform to the image they try (and fail) to project. Presuppositions and implicatures allow the speaker to convey a message without uttering the word. The audience has to "work" for it. The speakers then give themselves the ability to deny the information thus conveyed. All of those situations are rendered possible by the cooperation between speaker and audience. However, humour is usually a violation of that cooperation. The next chapter will explore the devices involved in the creation of humour but also the use for it when dealing with a serious topic like a constitutional crisis.

3. THE LANGUAGE OF HUMOUR

SSTH is the backbone of this dissertation. Details about the theory will run throughout this paper. One of the principles of this theory is that it belongs to the Forced Reinterpretation (FR) views. FR involves the Incongruity Resolution model (IR) mentioned earlier. For there to be an incongruity, the trust between speaker and hearer has to be broken for a short period. It is known as the garden-path effect in humour study; the hearer is led to one path and then forced onto another. This action involves the violation of Grice's cooperative principle. Incongruity Resolution model (and FR to an extent) along-side Grice's cooperative principles, especially one of the maxims (manner) whose disrespect leads to the creation of humour. Then, the second section will deal with the rules surrounding humour creation. The pragmatics and sociolinguistics involve rules, linguistics rules but also societal rules; we cannot laugh about everything nor with anyone. The third and last section will treat how the rules can be contained and curved to communicate on taboo topics and sometimes criticise a person while being protected by the law (US law).

3.1 Incongruity Resolution and the violation of Grice's cooperative principle

As mentioned earlier, Grice's cooperative principle relies on the cooperation of hearer and speaker. The maxims to the cooperative principle fit into four categories: quantity, quality, relation and manner. Quantity, quality and relation can be applied to satirical content. Quantity maxims state that 1) the speaker needs to make their contribution as informative as possible (for the current purpose of the exchange); 2) the speaker ought to not make a contribution more informative than it needs to be. Satire respects both those elements. The quality maxims involve 1) not saying what you believe to be false and 2) not saying that for which you lack adequate evidence. As we will see in chapter five, satirical pieces, especially in this corpus, are thoroughly researched and use archives images and documents. The relation maxim is: be relevant. Where humour and satire stray from the cooperative principle is in the manner maxims: (1) avoid obscurity of expression; 2) avoid ambiguity; 3) be brief; and 4) be orderly. Even though one can argue that points 3) and 4) are respected, the points 1) and 2) are not for humour relies on ambiguity¹⁷. As an illustration, consider the following example by Samantha Bee:

(5) our dumb democracy ran into a wall with a bucket on its head again

17 G. Yule. "Cooperation and Implicature." Pragmatics. Oxford: Oxford U., 2014. Print.

It is informative for the metaphor signal a lack of competence in the head of the government ("our dumb democracy"), a disregard for legislation and common sense ("with a bucket on its head") and dire and predictable consequences ("a wall"). Samantha Bee, the speaker, is convinced by what she says which follows the quality maxim and it is a summary of James Comey's dismissal and the way it was handled shortly after it happened, so it is relevant. It is also brief. However, it is obscure for it uses a complicated metaphor in which nothing is what it seems, and it is ambiguous in the sense that it is open to interpretation. This metaphor is a perfect example of incongruity. Don L.F. Nilsen and Alleen Pace Nilsen in their work *The language of humour: an introduction* explain incongruity as follow:

“You are in a hurry to get somewhere and it starts raining, but that's OK, because you have an umbrella. But then it starts raining hard, and the wind starts blowing – really hard – and your umbrella is turned inside out. It's ironic the umbrella, which is supposed to keep you out of the rain, is now an additional problem for you to manage in the rainstorm. But this is also funny visual imagery, because the umbrella, which is supposed to look like an umbrella, no longer looks like an umbrella ; this is the incongruity. [...] But your “mind's eye” knows what an umbrella is supposed to look like (they all look basically the same), and your brain is able to see the differences between the umbrella as it is and the umbrella as it should be. Your brain has managed to accomplish incongruity resolution.”

Several theories and principles of humour are at play in academic writing, only a few apply outside of riddles and pun studies. The main focus is, therefore, that of incongruity. However, when the spectator of a satirical show hears a joke, they anticipate a dichotomy, for they are watching a comedy show. If the joke is to succeed the type of incongruity has to be surprising, unexpected. The hearer tries to identify the punchline only in riddles. Following the garden-path effect, in their subconscious, the hearers can anticipate; it is when the ambiguity violates this interpretation that humour arises. Forced reinterpretation is the principle on which the SSTH rests. It focuses on jokes that combine two meanings – at once as in (5) or one following the other as in (3). Conflict rises between the foregrounded and the less salient meaning. The incongruity resolution model relies on the fact that the characteristics of one term describe another. When the hearer realises it, humour appears, and the incongruity resolution is then possible.

Incongruity can only exist through the Grice's cooperative principles by respecting most of the maxims and by violating a few. Humour relies on breaking the rules and conventions, but it has its own rules by which it has to abide to exist.

3.2 The Human Humour Rules

Humour could be the freedom to do and say what they wish for satirists. However, they are still

bound by rules in order not to cross the threshold between satire and defamation. The scholar, Emily Toth as reported in *The language of Humour*, established the first Human Humour Rule that would be followed by a few later on. Those rules aim to keep Humour funny and save it from becoming an attack tool.

The first one to be established was "Never target a quality that a person cannot change" as nationality, ethnicity or gender. This rule was modulated later by the following direction: "target your own attributes"; Therefore, a white woman can attack white women, a gay man can attack gay men...A good illustration of the acknowledgement of that rule by satirists is a section on *Late Night with Seth Meyers*¹⁸ entitled "Jokes Seth can't tell". He introduces this part as follows: "Here at *Late Night* I deliver a monologue comprised of jokes written by a diverse team of writers; as a result, many jokes come across my desk that due to my being a straight white male would be difficult for me to deliver.". He is joined in this section by two of his writers Amber, an African-American woman and Jenny caucasian woman who is also a catholic lesbian from Puerto Rico. Those rules seem not to apply to single jokes. Satirists often make fun of Donald Trump's hands because of their smallness. However, there can always be an explanation. For Donald Trump's hands, the mockery is not aimed at his hands themselves but rather at his insistence that they are "big" and not small. More often than not, satirist (male for most of them) do attack woman however not as women but as politicians or famous figures—those rules then are filled with greys areas which give satirists freedom in their jokes.

Two rules that go together are more often than not respected by most satirists: "Never target the victim" and "always target a strength so that it empowers rather than humiliates the victim". By attacking mostly political figures, satirists do abide by those rules. The week mentioned here underlines the respect of this rule. When James Comey launched his investigation into Hillary Clinton's lost emails, he was the target of satire. However, in this case, he is mostly defended by the speakers underlying his qualities that "he has character" (according to Bill Maher) that he is "independent" as opposed to partisan (Samantha Bee), "cautious" (Stephen Colbert), or "huge" (John Oliver). Those rules seem to matter most when applied to Donald Trump as a target. Indeed, he seems to be more often than not guilty of what he appears to be guilty of but sees himself as a victim. It seems to allow the satirist to victimise him a little more.

The last rule relates to reporting tragedy: "Be sure there is the spatial and temporal and psychological distance before making fun of a tragedy". In one of the videos from this corpus, Stephen Colbert compares James Comey's Dismissal to Abraham Lincoln's murder.¹⁹ A mixture of

18 *Late Night with Seth Meyers* is a late-night talk-show hosted by Seth Meyers on NBC since early 2014.

19 Cf example (8) in section 6.2

laughter and outrage from his audience prompted him to ask "too soon?". Humour lies in the formula: "tragedy + time". However, expect for this example and a few others, this rule is not strictly necessary in this corpus.

To sum up, the Human Humour Rules are here to ensure that the satirists do not offend. It was the original purpose. However, targets of satire, usually get offended. Even though some agree to play the game as the guests of Stephen Colbert in his previous show *The Colbert Report*²⁰, some could feel offended up to sue the satirists. It, of course, does happen. However, humour and jokes offer non-negligible protection to satirists.

3.3 Humour as a communication tool: "basically, jokes are fine"

Satire uses humour as a communication tool; As we have seen in previous sections, comedians follow the rules specific to humouristic content. However, those rules are loose enough for the comedian to laugh of almost everything with almost everyone. It allows the satirist to convey messages and share pieces of information that a more severe medium would not be able to communicate.

Humour is often used to soften challenging topics. The terrorist attacks on November 13th, 2015, in Paris, as mentioned in the introduction, was treated by satire. I gave the example of John Oliver. However, others as Stephen Colbert or British satirist Russel Howard also did a piece on it. It was the following week, and only little was said, merely their reaction to the event for the formula "tragedy + time" was not yet reached. However, they've managed to make people laugh about it and lift spirits. Humour was aimed at the terrorist group ISIS, responsible for the attacks, and their doctrine. Humour helped, in a sense, grasp why those places in Paris were targets even though no one can explain how people can do that to other people. Humour helps the speaker to comment on difficult to understand topics or painful ones.

Humour has another virtue, it helps retain information more efficiently. Have you ever wondered how you could more easily remember the lyrics of a song than important historical dates? The rhymes, perhaps. Not only. Listening to music or hearing a joke is more pleasant than reading a history book or watching the news. We retain what is agreeable, what caught our attention. As someone who watches a lot of political satire, I will more easily recognise a political figure as the nickname he or she was given by a satirist. As people more easily remember lines from a comedy film than from a tragic one.

²⁰ *The Colbert Report* was a second degree satirical show where Stephen Colbert portrayed white-wing host as the conspirationist Alex Jones for example. It aired from late 2005 to late 2014 and was Stephen Colbert first show as main host.

Humour is also legally useful. Indeed it protects the speaker. John Oliver had a personal experience with that. On June 19, 2017, John Oliver released a piece, extracted from *Last Week Tonight* about the coal industry, entitled *Coal*. In this piece, John Oliver highly criticised Bob Murray, CEO of a coal company for his leadership. Before realising the report, as is the law, *Last Week Tonight* production warned Bob Murray about the piece. John Oliver and his team were then warned, through two letters not to air the segment or Bob Murray would sue. They did, and he did. For two years, no news. However, on November 19, 2019, *Last Week Tonight* released a piece entitled *SLAPP Suits* in which John Oliver relates the suit between *Last Week Tonight* and Bob Murray. The final judge's decision was in favour of John Oliver for "the Supreme court has consistently protected 'loose, figurative' language that cannot reasonably be understood to convey facts about someone." John Oliver commented this decision by adding "basically, jokes are fine". Satire is therefore pertinent for its use of humour. Humour allows for a message to be conveyed, remembered and for the speaker to be protected. Comedy, therefore, uses humour as a communication tool. Satire's aim is to both inform and entertain; it can be said that the entertainment part allows for the information to take place into people's mind, and stay there.

3.4 Summary

As seen in this chapter, SSTH is a theory of humour that lies in the Incongruity resolution model. Incongruity usually occurs through the violation of Grice's cooperative principle. Indeed the two maxims: "avoid obscurity of expression" and "avoid ambiguity" are ignored when it comes to creating incongruity. Trust has to be built and then broken for humour to develop. However, humour has this power that the audience, used to being abused, will come back for more. In a second section, we saw that comedy, to be seen as humour, is bound by the Human Humour Rules. There are five rules:

1. Never target a quality that a person cannot change;
2. Target your attributes;
3. Never target the victim;
4. Always target a strength, so that it is empowering rather than humiliates the victim;
5. Be sure there is the spatial, temporal and, psychological distance before making fun of a tragedy.

Those rules frame what is possible while being loose and open to interpretation. It allows humour to be a useful communication tool. Protected by its humourous attributes, a satirist can denounce injustices and wrongdoings without fearing censorship (to an extent). Those characteristics are

paramount when it comes to satire and especially under the Trump Era. In today's America, any dissident voice is shut-down by being called "fake", "democrat hoax" or "witch hunt".

4. SATIRE IN PRESIDENT TRUMP'S AMERICA

The previous chapter presented humour as a communication tool. A set of rules and principles limit the possibilities of humorous discourse. Humour is a complex tool that demands the full cooperation of both hearer and speaker if not the audience might not identify the item as a joke. The tools humour uses - double meaning, bisociation, suspension of disbelief – demand trust between the satirist and the audience. This trust is placed on a person and not only a discourse which involves bias. Distrust for general knowledge that comes with post-modernism allowed satirist to rise as individuals and not only mouthpieces for a larger message. Bias is even more so significant in sharing a perspective than in the post-truth era we have entered now since 9/11²¹. Bias in the post-truth era will be the first section. The second section will treat satire. It will attempt to define it and list its characteristics. Satire is essential in the post-truth era, especially in Trump's America, where a country divided in two along party lines looks for information others than those given by the White House senior staff. The third section will explain satire's role under the Trump era and will also define what is meant by "the Trump Era" in contrast to the post-truth era.

4.1 *Bias in humour and satire in the post-truth era*

From the 1960s on, the arts, in general, entered what is known as post-modernism. Encyclopedia Britannica defines Postmodernism as follows: "in Western philosophy, a late 20th-century movement characterized by broad scepticism, subjectivism, or relativism; a general suspicion of reason; and an acute sensitivity to the role of ideology in asserting and maintaining political and economic power." This movement, in the US, was advanced even further after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center 11 September 2001. After what is known as 9/11, lies came from the White House, breaking the little trust the American people had left in their government.

The younger generations known as millennials (born from the early 1980s to the late 1990s) searched for other sources to rely on, mainly the internet.²² The rise of 21st Century satire is partly due to the height of the internet and its ability to post and share videos: on video platforms as Youtube, DailyMotion and more recently TickTock; social media as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Pinterest; and online satirical newspapers as The Onion (US) or the Lemon Press (UK). Sometimes they can go even further with fake websites to prove a point as equifacks.com, experianne.com, tranonion.com. Those three websites were a counterargument to three credit

²¹ Terrorist attacks on the New York World Trade Center on 11 September 2001

²² Sophia A. McClennen and Remy M. Maisel *Is Satire Saving Our Nation?: Mockery and American Politics*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. Print.

report bureaus: Equifax, Experian, TransUnion that had a 5% mistaken identity rates when producing an individual credit report. They refused to address this discrepancy. John Oliver in his piece *Credit Reports* aired in 2016 argues that 5% can ruin people's lives for in the US a lot of aspects of an individual's life depend on a good credit report: job application, appartement hunting, loan application...Mistaken identity can have dire consequences. The rise of the internet and the post-truth era allowed for the individualism of satire. A satirist would always speak for oneself and make a name for themselves, nowadays they can have their shows and shape it entirely to their liking.

Politics and mainstream media are today far from "reality". Which leads the audiences to rely more on humourous content, that seems to brush closer to the truth than actual news do. (Chapter 5 treats the contrast between satirical news and factual news in details). What is interesting to know here is that the public is more receptive to satire than it is to the news. Several surveys tend to prove this point. I conducted one myself among students of Université Toulouse Jean Jaurès, student of English, Graduate and undergraduate.²³ The goal of this study was to establish the way people, millennials and "gen Z" (the generation born after 1997), in particular, get their news and which news related personality they trust the most. Out of the 47 participants, 94% declared getting their news from social media, the online newspapers came in second with 74%, and political satire came third 51%. It is also interesting to note that 96% of respondents using social media also watches political satire on TV. The next question was more telling. The participants received a list of 21 well-known people. Out of the 21 (from both the US and the UK), 11 are journalists, and 10 are satirists. The question was the following: "in the following list of people hosting shows providing news (in both the US and the UK), please tick the names of the people you know of but not necessarily watch". The top three are John Oliver, Stephen Colbert and Trevor Noah, with respectively 53%, 47% and 43%. The three of them are satirists. The first journalist on the list is Anderson Cooper, 6th in line, with 26%. It is also interesting to note that this particular journalist often features in John Oliver's and Stephen Colbert's pieces. The following question concerned the same list but focused on the personality regularly watched. The same three came in first with a different order: Stephen Colbert with 40%, John Oliver with 38% and Trevor Noah with 36%. The first journalist on the list is still Anderson Cooper at the fifth place with 15% sharing it with satirist John Stewart who retired in 2014.

This study marks the point at least for French student of English studies that their political knowledge about the English speaking world especially the US (need to wait for the fourth place in each list to find a UK-based satirist) relies on comedy shows. Humour explains it. However, bias

²³ Cf Annexe C for full report

can too. In the cases of the satirist, the comedian personality is allowed to shine, and they follow their agenda and not that of a specific TV channel. They do not air on the news channel but comedy channels or entertainment channels (more on this in chapter 5).

4.2 Forms and characteristics of satire

It is paramount first and foremost to distinguish between satire and pseudo-satire, also dubbed mock-news. Pseudo-satire, as in the British shows *Mock the Week* or the satirical online journal *The Onion*, does humour for humour sake, using political content. Satire in shows, such as those from the corpus, go into depth and analyse the subject at hand. Humour is there to lessen the blow. There is a combination of information and entertainment that pseudo-satire does not contain.²⁴ The word satire is uneasy to define; it is both a form and an attitude. Formal satire does not exist anymore, but the attitude remains.

The Oxford English Dictionary of British Literature define satirical attitude as follows:

“The satirical attitude is a much wider phenomenon than ‘formal satire’, and it can inhabit any form, including drama, song, fiction, personal letter, or cartoon. It takes a sharp eye for hypocrisy, a deep suspicion of the rich and famous, a vivid wit, and a confident set of values- largely implicit - against which corruption and folly are measured.”

The other important element in satire is the role of the satirist. The merge between information and entertainment comes from a deep desire for justice and a need to avoid censorship. The satirist is consumed by an unstable mix of amusement and anger. Satire attacks corrupt manners and tendencies. Satire deforms reality to shed light on “vices, corrupted passions, foolishness and faults of men, society, politics and a particular time”²⁵. Satire does not have only the goal to entertain, it is here to inform, and to, a certain extent, ask for action. The target is often the rich and powerful.

A satirical work is free in terms of form and lengths, but some criteria limit it. It has to follow the rules of the satirical mode.²⁶ As mentioned earlier satire has to both inform and entertain. The information ratio is the most important, it can be broad (or general) or personal. In the case of broad satire, it is society as an entity that is the subject of criticism; it can undergo personification as long as the piece does not target any particular individual. It is the case with example (5) where democracy becomes a "dumb" person running "into a wall".

24 Dieter Declercq “A Definition of Satire (And Why a Definition Matters).” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 76, no. 3, 2018, pp. 319–330., doi:10.1111/jaac.12563.

25 Espace Français.com / La satire

26 Aurélie Denat, Political satire and music: Humorous (and political) songs in Donald Trump's America , *Miranda* 2019

When it is personal, satire attacks an individual for themselves or as the representative of specific vice or ailment for society. It is the case in example (3) where the former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn is compared to a puppet character. The attack is on Michael Flynn in particular. Another dichotomy is to take into account when analysing satire: implicit or explicit satire. Explicit satire makes it adamant that the person or society trait put forward is the subject of the criticism. It relies on the denoted meaning of a term. Example (3) is an explicit satire for Michael Flynn is mentioned by name. He is the target there. In the case of an implicit satire, an image is used rather than a denoted statement. It relies on metaphorical language, on the connoted definition of a term. It is the case in most examples in the corpus for the main focus here is comparisons. Instances (1), (2) and (5) are examples of that.

Satire is also highly context dependant. It depends on recent events and references to be understood by the audience or the readership in the case of written satire. The writers have to take into account the time of writing, the airing time, the audience, the time on screen and the personal argumentative line of the speaker. Satire also has to be constructed using a narrative arc of which the speaker is the narrator. The speech (as is the case here) has to be structured and follow an internal logic perceivable by the audience without being too prominent. Satire has to be actual and of interest and at the same time shed light on a little known subject. It is the case in dedicated shows as *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*,²⁷ *Real Time with Bill Maher*,²⁸ and *Full Frontal with Samantha Bee*.²⁹ *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*³⁰, on the other hand only treats “news of the day” time of information for it is a daily entertainment show. While the other three are weekly political shows.

Satire is therefore complex; however, the main principle is the same: inform and entertain. Whether it is broad, personal, implicit and/or explicit, it gives information to the audience in a “nice” way. The deep and profound subject is usually dull, and satire makes them accessible to a broader audience. However, now that America is strongly divided along the party line, what is the role of satire? The last years have since its presence and power augmented in the US. One can say that satirists are thriving under the Trump Era.

4.3 Satire in Donald Trump's America

The United is strongly divided among party-line since the two main parties became distinct in the 1970s. Donald Trump enjoys this division that feeds his "us versus them" rhetoric. Them being the

²⁷ *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* is a weekly political comedy show that airs on HBO since early 2014

²⁸ *Real Time with Bill Maher* is a weekly political comedy show that airs on HBO since early 2003

²⁹ *Full Frontal with Samantha Bee* is a weekly political comedy show that airs on TBS since early 2016

³⁰ *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* is a daily entertainment show taht airs on CBS since late 2015

democrats, the media and all who oppose him and criticise his decisions. He also enjoys a strong core of supporters and some with considerable public influence as his senior staff or news anchors at the historically conservative news channel Fox News.

The two robust party systems divided the country along strong opinions over race relations, gender equality, LGBTQA+ rights, economic models, federal and state governments powers...The two parties – Republican on the right and Democrats on the left – have argued since the 1970s. The opposition is strong and voting against a party line is almost unthinkable as shows the reaction of Republicans – Donald Trump's party – when Mitt Romney, a hardcore republican voted against Donald Trump during the Impeachment trial of 2019-2020. The system of election is partly to blame for this division because of the winner-takes-all method where a winner gains all the votes in the constituency in opposition to the run-off elections as in France for example, where the winner of the popular vote wins the election. This way, Trump got elected through the electoral college even though he lost the popular vote.³¹ He was not the first president to become president that way. However, the use he made of his presidential power following this controversial election did not help his case. Where Donald Trump differs from the others is that he seems to be using the presidential powers to their full extent. Dismissing the FBI director is, in fact, a prerogative of the president, but no-one before Donald Trump used this power without being pushed by the legislative branch (Congress) or the judicial branch (Supreme Court). Even Richard Nixon did not do it directly when the FBI investigated his 1972 campaign and the Watergate Scandal. The investigation that led to impeachment proceedings and President Nixon's resignation.

Donald Trump is not only controversial with what he does but also with what he says. He often contradicts himself and loses his train of thought within a single speech. Mockery usually ensues. He also has difficulties admitting when he is wrong or conveyed false information. A relatively recent scandal involved a sharpie and a modified hurricane map. What is sometimes referred to as the Sharpiegate occurred from September, 1st to September 11th 2019. The Hurricane Dorian was headed for US mainland when the President tweeted that it would hit Alabama (while no maps indicated this). The local weather bureau issued a reassuring statement declaring that the state would not be a victim of Dorian as an answer to several calls made by scared residents of Alabama. However, the President doubled down on his declaration with a map, introduced to reporters on the September 4th, a map that did not include Alabama except for a half-circle added using a sharpie. In the meantime, President Trump allegedly ordered aids to put pressure on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to confirm that what the President had tweeted was true.

31 James Q. Wilson *American Government: Institutions and Policies*. Boston, MA: Cengage, 2021. Print.

The Hurricane Dorian-Alabama controversy (as a more formal name) represented a field day for satirists. It was commented as follows by Seth Meyers³²: "It perfectly captures the constant exhaustive bewilderment of living through the Trump era."

The era of mistakes and all means to cover them up instead of acknowledging them and moving on start from the beginning of Donald Trump's presidency. Indeed the first instances before, James Comey's dismissal was the "Bowling Green massacre". Kellyanne Conway, the US counsellor to the President, mentions this fictitious terrorist attack, less than ten days after Donald Trump's inauguration ceremony. Conway used this reference as a justification for what would be known as the "Muslim ban", a travel ban decided by the Trump administration on seven Muslim majority countries, enacted by Donald Trump himself through an executive order. However, this incident never occurred. After the backlash this declaration made (not to one but two newspaper and a during a tv interview), rather than admit this declaration was a lie, they dubbed it "alternative fact." To explain an alternative fact they – Trump senior staff and Fox News anchors – compared it to weather reports, saying that meteorologist did not always agree on the weather. This explanation led satirists and even journalists from other networks to criticise them, even more, Bill Maher declaring: "Yes they can disagree on what the weather will be like tomorrow. But not on what it was yesterday!". Through this simple utterance, he makes the difference between facts (yesterday) and prediction (tomorrow). Alternative facts are, therefore, non-sensical. However, it is a rhetoric that has been widely used since (especially nowadays amid the COVID 19 pandemic).

James Comey's dismissal was only at the beginning of a long list of scandals that rocked Donald Trump's Presidency. However, it might be the first one that made the world in general and satirist, in particular, realise that it was not funny anymore. John Oliver would comment on that during the 2017 Emmy Ceremony. He received the *Outstanding Writing For A Variety Series* award on behalf of *Last Week Tonight* writing team. Presenting the team of writers assembling behind him he declared: "With the way the world is right now it's easy to think that their [the writers] jobs are easier they're harder because it just won't stop".

4.4 Summary

In a strongly divided America, satire is on the front line of political debate. The satirists are therefore occupying a privileged and highly criticised stand. In the time where everything is questioned and debated, they stand for what they believe is right. They are, of course, biased and that bias is currently against the power in place, namely Donald Trump. To oppose him and what

³² Seth Meyers. *Trump's Sharpie Scandal Has Triggered Multiple Investigations: A Closer Look* published on september 6th 2019

they dub as his "surrogates" they use satirical tools. They would in turn use general satire and attack society or what it has become comparing the US to the dictatorship of an idiotic individual that acts first and does not think. They can also use personal attacks against an individual that represent, to them, everything that is wrong with America. They can do all of this directly or using metaphorical language through explicit or implicit satire. However, they only have their wit to fight against an administration that will justify anything they do and say using pressure on government agencies like NOAA to back Trump's lies or come up with "alternative facts" to justify his controversial policies. Even though political satirists report on the news and comment on them, they are not news reporters nor journalists. The difference does not just stop at their use of humour; it is more complex and subtle than that as will be shown in the next chapter.

5. NEWS AND SATIRICAL NEWS

Satire does not hide the fact that it is not journalism. Satirist themselves keep on repeating that they are not journalists and that what they are doing is not journalism. They are merely comedians with a strong political opinion. Comparisons between satirical shows and journalism would lead John Oliver to declare this "whenever this show [*Last Week Tonight*] is mistakenly called journalism, it is a slap in the face to the actual journalist whose work we rely on."³³ Even though it is not journalism, satire does not include only mockery, it comments and offers a thoroughly researched critique. To avoid controversies, they hide their true meaning in innuendoes, double entendre and double meaning. However, satirical news borrows from journalism in subject, format and visuals. There are differences and similarities between the two genres. The similarities help satire identify as a kind of news, whereas the differences help satirical news be identified as satirical. This chapter will explore those differences and similarities through three dichotomies: journalism v. Satire; Journalist v. Satirist; Independent v. Partisan.

5.1 Journalism versus satire

Nowadays, news has become commercial in the sense that 24h TV channels have to provide an endless array of information, always more. Each report is not treated nor researched. The story is forgotten as it is consumed. The severe undertone of actual news renders it tedious for most viewers that usually watch the news as they are flipping through the channels and not as a primary choice. News story usually lasts up to two-minutes long in the endless news cycle. News does not fulfil its goal in the digital age because of the fast pace it has taken on in recent years. Before "the failing New York Times" was considered "fake news" by President Trump and his supporters, the phrase "fake news" related to political satire as *Last Week Tonight* or *The Daily Show*.

However, journalism and satire have similarities in the way they choose their topics; still, to different degrees. As stated in *Language and Power*, Bell (1991: 156-8) lists criteria for the choice of newsworthy stories: negativity, recency, proximity, symmetry, unambiguity, unexpectedness, superlativeness, relevance, personalisation, eliteness, attribution.³⁴ The first three explains as to why news stories are always negative, recent and close to the audience. It is the case for both journalism and satire. The next one, unity, marks a slight difference between journalism and comedy.

33 *Journalism: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (HBO)*. Youtube. Home Box Office, 08 Aug. 2016. Web. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bq2_wSsDwkQ&t=344s>.

34 Barry A. Hollander "Late-Night Learning: Do Entertainment Programs Increase Political Campaign Knowledge for Young Viewers?" *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 49.4 (2005): 402-15. Print.

Connance concerns events which can be made to cohere with ideas and understandings that people already have and therefore are likely to have high news value. Journalism will treat cases that fit this that are easy to explain and quick to go over. In contrast, satire will focus on the opposite, challenging to grasp topic as, *Net Neutrality*. Unambiguity, unexpectedness and superlatives relate to the idea that a news story has to be clear-cut or explainable, does not fit a routine and concerns the best or worst of something. Still here, both journalism and satire matched those criteria to different degrees. Relevance, personalisation, eliteness and attribution usually work in consort. The news story has to concern someone famous and influential, and that could potentially have an impact on the viewer's life.

However, where news and satirical news differ is in the treatment of memory. News stories are often forgotten and usually pretty fast. Still, forgetting is not just one way. It exists five types of forgetting as detailed and explain in "News Satire: Giving the News a Memory."³⁵ The first one is Always Already Forgotten. Those are the stories that do not make it to the news. Those stories are not covered by news satirists, for satirical news rely on the work of journalists and therefore do not treat news that has not been attended by journalists. The second type of forgetting is oblivion. Those stories that make it to the news but do not last. Those stories are sometimes treated in political satire, as in the section like "Meanwhile" in the *Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, or "Now this" in *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*. Some can even advance to main subjects as *NRA*, or *NRA TV*..The last three are where satire differs from journalism. Forgotten past, rewriting history and Hyper-amnesia are what differentiate satirical news from actual news. The lack of historical context causes a forgotten past. It also goes for "rewriting History" that goes even further: a news story makes it to the news and is then mentioned again years later without containing information gained since it first aired. Hyper-Amnesia is when journalists go even further: facts are rewritten while the story is still on the air. The response of the Trump Team amid James Comey's dismissal is a perfect example of that. It was more apparent on Fox News, when even though the truth had come out: that Donald Trump terminated Comey's employment because he investigated Michael Flynn and Russia's involvement in the 2016 elections. Fox News persisted into saying that this was not the reason for James Comey's dismissal because another investigation known as "Hillary's emails" had cost Hillary Clinton the election. Satire has a solution to prevent those last three types of forgetting. They use archive footage, and edit footage over some time to show the change (or lack of) in a discourse on the same topic. They always place their subject into historical context. A piece of news satire is on average 6min long and up to 20 minutes in shows specialised in political satire

35 Basu, Laura. "News Satire: Giving the News a Memory." *TripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique. Open Access Journal for a Global Sustainable Information Society*

as *Last Week Tonight*, *Full Frontal with Samantha Bee* or *Real Time with Bill Maher*. The news stories persist over time.

Journalism aims to inform. Satirical news goes further than that. Among scholars, there are four opinions as to the use of political satire. Political satire can mock the powerful. Ridiculing a vulnerable group in the form of scapegoating is not considered satire. Satire incites actions. There is a phenomenon known as the "John Oliver Effect" that John Oliver denies exists. Journalists first dubbed it after a piece aired by John Oliver on *Net Neutrality*. Net Neutrality is the fact that no matter the website; the downloading speed is the same. However, under the administration of Barack Obama, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) proposed to permit fast and slow broadband lanes depending on your internet provider and whether or not the website you were trying to visit had paid the necessary fee to your provider. It would compromise Net Neutrality. John Oliver encouraged his viewers to send comments on the FCC website against this plan. In the following days, the FCC website crashed, and the FCC voted to reclassify broadband as a utility in 2015. This decision would not survive the Donald Trump's administration. However, the John Oliver effect had struck. The third role of satire would be to play a conservative position in maintaining the status quo for it always defends the same values, even though those values evolve through time. And lastly, it plays a critical and pedagogical role, teaching people about complicated issues. Of course, those roles are possible because of the use of humour. "Being a comedy, news satire does not have to abide by the conventions of news and current events programming, and are free to provide alternative perspective and critique."³⁶

Journalism and satire make no difference in the subject they choose to treat, but on what they decide to foreground and how to treat them. Those differences are allowed by the great differences between a journalist and a satirist as this next section will show.

5.2 Journalists and satirists

A satirist is not a journalist as they will argue themselves. However, a satirist has more financial freedom than journalists do, and they can choose their own stories, they are also not alone. However, satirical news does have the word "news" in it. Satirists play with the visual code of journalism in terms of staging and clothing. The other major difference, though, is even though journalist sometimes have their name in the title of the show they are still a mouthpiece. Journalists outshine other journalists through their professionalism; satirist outperforms other satirists through their vivid personalities. The journalist is also sometimes a solitary adventure, whereas a satirist is

³⁶ Basu, Laura. "News Satire: Giving the News a Memory." *TripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique*. *Open Access Journal for a Global Sustainable Information Society*

the result of team efforts. Satirists do not see themselves as journalists as this quote suggests: "Sometimes kids come up to me, and they'll say 'Michael Che, I get all my news from you' and I say 'don't do that! I bring the ice'." A little explanation is needed here. Right before this sentence, Michael Che explains, after Buzz Feed (an entertainment website) published a news article that organisations ought to keep to their specialities and not branch out. He then compares the political scene to thanksgiving, saying that Buzz Feed "brings the ice". Metaphorically it means that they do not contribute much, but are still needed. By using the same metaphor "I bring the ice" to designate him, he acknowledges that he is not a journalist and that what he and his "co-anchor" Colin Jost do is not journalism. Their piece is closer to mock-news than satirical news. Their political comment often relies on personal experiences as example (4) rather than thoroughly researched facts.

It is interesting to notice that in the staging of satirical shows, especially for three of the speakers choose to present their monologues standing up, facing an audience (instead of a camera). They are then free to move around. In contrast, their environment incloses journalists. Only John Oliver follows the same structure by spending the entirety of his show sitting behind a desk. Visually, the stage resembles that of news channels. Samantha Bee's set more than the three others, for she is standing in front of a screen. In terms of costumes, the four speakers wear formal clothes – suits and pantsuit – usually similar from one show to the other. However, Stephen Colbert often uses accessories as a baseball cap or funny glasses. Even though he does not change his clothing, John Oliver often stages funny looking characters that add humour to his show. Stephen Colbert and John Oliver also play with staging sometimes playing with light and screen. Bill Maher is the only of the four that does not share the screen with an embedded screen, nor other comedians nor accessories.



Fig 2: Samantha Bee's set



Fig 3: Stephen Colbert's accessories



Fig 4 Bill Maher's audience

A journalist has to abide by an ethic as doctors. They should do no harm, and they should not become part of their story. Journalists should also not discriminate based on race, religion, sexual orientation, or disabilities. As we have seen in chapter three, the Human Rules of Humour also forbid satirists to do the same, however, as the title of this paper suggests, they use name-calling, journalists are not allowed to do that. In terms of the register used, journalists have to stay formal in the sentences and formula they use. On the other hand, satirists are free to use a common language and neologisms of their creation as getting "Trumped" from Steven Colbert. On cable as Samantha Bee, John Oliver and Bill Maher they can even use swear-words; the most frequent being the F word. Journalists also need to keep their tone as neutral as possible, whenever possible. Satirists do not need to abide by that rule; their style is usually passionate, sometimes amused, sometimes angry but always full of emotions. Their personality can show no matter the topic, no matter the circumstances.

In term of the workloads, journalists and satirists are also different. A professional journalist, will, most of the time, research the stories themselves and then deliver them in a dark tone. It is different for satirists. The diversity of their team of writers, allow them to go deep into a topic but also to deliver jokes that can appeal to everyone. John Oliver and Samantha Bee often comment on their writers and the difficulties of their jobs. Bee even stages them more often than not in photographs to illustrate their hardships in writing under the Trump Era.



Fig 5. Samantha Bee's writers after their "second whiskey of the day."

The journalists and the satirists share the same goal; they aim to inform, however, the satirists aim to entertain as well. Journalists ought to be objective and formal in a solo work when satirists are subjective, funny (or at least ought to be) and surrounded by a team of writers. The dichotomy subjectivity/objectivity also occurs in the job description. Therefore journalists ought to be independent when satirists are partisan.

5.3 Independent or partisan

For most people, the difference between journalism and political satire is the idea of objectivism. Journalism is supposed to be objective and satire not to be. Journalism is, therefore independent, whereas satire is partisan. However, news channels as entertainment channels have an affiliation. The journalist in himself has to be objective, but the satirist does not. However, the subject and people treated fall from both sides of the aisle, and even though journalists and satirists treat both of them, they do so differently.

Each TV channel has its affiliation even though journalism is theoretically objective. The affiliation of a TV news channel is not as clear-cut as in satire. A TV channel is democratic or republican inclined. On the two ends of the spectre in-network are CNN and Fox News. CNN is democratically willing. Still, it does not stop its news anchors from inviting hardcore republicans on air as they are to be objective they need to offer the same amount of airing time to both ends of the political spectrum. However, comments and theories expressed by the journalists tend to show

their liberal side. Fox News, on the other hand, is Republican inclined. Dubbed "state TV" by most journalists it always follows the Republican agenda and cut down all democrats proposal as it was the case under the Obama Administration. Both news channels, especially Fox News, promote their independent status; however, they are anything but that. Home Box Office (HBO), Turner Broadcasting System (TBS) and Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) airing respectively *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (HBO)*, *Real Time with Bill Maher (HBO)*, *Full Frontal with Samantha Bee (TBS)*, *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert (CBS)* are partisan. They follow a particular political line and do not hide that fact. They are entertainment channels.

The satirist is not independent, nor do they pretend to be. The political affiliation is more susceptible to abide by when airing on a cable channel (privately own) as HBO or TBS. On network television (public domain) as CBS language has to be formal as we underlined earlier and political affiliation cannot be as evident. Therefore, Stephen Colbert on CBS is less open about his association. However, he is democratically enclined. His commentaries and the angle by which he treats his topic place him on the liberal side. Samantha Bee and John Oliver, respectively on TBS and HBO are both foreign. Therefore they were not raised in a country strongly divided along party lines. However, they both share views usually attributed to the democratic party in the US; Bill Maher on HBO is the more open about political affiliation and labels himself as a liberal. Those open affiliation, of course, influence the targets of their jokes and the terms used to comment. Those different affiliations also direct comparisons.

However, both sides of the political aisle appear in both formats. In both cases, there is an equal time on air. Barack Obama was as criticised as Donald Trump was by satire, the critics were only different. Under the Trump era, the news seems to focus more on the Republican party. However, satirists still find the time and the materials to shoot at the democrats too. The angle picked is different, the argument to attack the democrats now it that they are out of touch. In an extract from the show *Weekend Update* (a passage that is no longer available on Youtube), Colin Jost argues that the Democrats are too out of touch. This comment follows the oval office reunion between President Donald Trump (R), Vice President Mike Pence (R), Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D) and Chuck Schumer (D) about reopening the country after the shutdown over the federal budget of January 2019. "After the meeting, Schumer said that Trump quote 'lives in a cocoon of his own mistruth' dude, just call him a liar. Democrats keep using this flowery language they forget they're talking to a country where most people share their opinion through pictures of fire and a dookie with eyeballs."

A journalist is supposed to be objective, but nowadays, in a country split in two, it fits into a set of beliefs, more on the left (Democrat) or more on the right (Republican). Satirists are usually on the

left side of the aisle (in recent years, however). They place themselves within this spectrum. It can be said of both journalists and satirists that they serve a political agenda and in this way, they are partisan while exposing news from both sides (or criticising both sides) in this way they are independent.

5.4 Summary

Journalism and satirical news do have numerous similarities. They indeed choose to treat similar topics base on the negativity of the impact of the stories and their relatedness to influential people. However, they differ in their treatment of memory. Journalism does not aim at maintaining particular accounts in people's mind. The treatment of those stories often receives artificial treatment. Some even lose their factuality over time. Satire remedy this by carefully researching the topics, and supporting it through the use of archives and follow-ups over time (update that refers to past pieces, playing a clip from their past shows). Journalism aim to inform. Satire could explicitly incite to act when journalism does it implicitly. A journalist is a trustworthy person, competent and professional. A satirist is simply a comedian creating entertainment. Visually, TV satire is close to that of news outlets. Satirist stand on a stage or seating behind a desk. There usually is a screen (within the screen or imbedded) that allows for archives footage. However, satirists can play with the staging with lights, graphics and accessories and characters of their creation. Satirists also perform in front of an audience. It allows them to see the impact of their speech. A satirist is not alone in his/her work. When a journalist ought to research and write their report satirists are surrounded by writers that they often credit and sometimes even stage. TV channels also have an affiliation, whether they are News TV channels or entertainment. Whether they are privately owned or on the public domain. Satirists are not objective; they're subjective, even biased and do not hide that fact. Journalists are more reserved. Both satirists and journalists treat topic from both political points of views. Even though journalists need to stay objective (even if some as Fox News fail) satirists, on the other hand, do not have the obligation. Satirists are therefore more relatable than journalists. They use comparisons to ease the audience into comprehensively tricky topics. They are comparing those difficult to apprehend events to everyday life.

6. MAIN THEMES

Satirists are different than journalists as we have already established. Satirists also have their own identity and their signature. The next five chapters will explore their similarities and their differences in term of the use of comparisons through different angles. This chapter, chapter 6, will explore those similarities and differences through their use of different themes. While analysing the corpus and its 84 items, I managed to detect four different types of sources for the comparisons. The most used one was, of course, daily events. All speakers use them. It composes 42% of the overall of the corpus. In details, it goes from 37% (for John Oliver and Stephen Colbert) to 48% for Samantha Bee. Because this particular theme does not mark any difference in use between the speakers, it will not appear here. The other three themes identify the differences. The first two are equally used in the corpus (27% each). However, their use differs from one speaker to the other. The comparisons between TV shows (and other works of fiction) is the first one treated here. History and politics come next. The last one, sex, is used by three of the speakers and make up only 4% of the corpus (with three instances). It is, however, interesting to know who uses it and how.

6.1 *Television culture*

The themes of TV shows and fiction is a long one. This particular section will only deal with TV series and show aimed at adults. Indeed chapter 9 will deal with child folklore and references to children literature and TV. TV was already mentioned, for example (1) relating to the comparisons between Michael Flynn and Sam the Eagle. This particular section relates to the use of TV life by the different speakers. How many references they use can help determine a new characteristic for each speaker. Adding to their overall use of comparisons and name calling, it is one step further to establishing a style for each speaker.

According to the statistics I established for this particular theme, the use of TV shows and fiction references is not the same depending on the speakers. Taking fiction as a whole help see where each speakers affinity lies, and it is also interesting to note that the use differs depending on the speaker's gender but also on the channel they operate. The one that makes the less use of this theme is Samantha Bee. It could be explained by a will to relate to a larger audience and therefore, use less references that might not be understood. Bill Maher also does not make great use of it, 20%; however, his sources are usually more elaborate and nor merely allusion or mentions. They carry more weight. It is the same for John Oliver and his use of TV references. Stephen Colbert is the one that favours them the most (45% of his items relate to fiction); however, they are rarely elaborate

and often relate to name-calling. It could relate to the fact that Stephen Colbert's show is an entertainment show. Aside from the monologue, he receives guest usually actors, singers or comedian to promote their artistic news.

TV, in particular, can also be significant when mentioning an important news cycle or even the President of the United States, Donald J Trump. Indeed, Donald Trump, before being a candidate to the presidential elections of 2016, was a reality TV star (among other things). It is central to the following comparison by Bill Maher:

(6) the attorney, acting Attorney General, fired; national security adviser? "you're fired!" FBI director? "You're..." Welcome to the *Apprentice*: Nuclear edition.

The list of dismissals is easily apprehended. The reference to *the Apprentice*³⁷ demands further research. *The Apprentice* was a TV show about a CEO, Donald Trump, advising aspiring CEO. He would fire them week after week, depending on the audience. His signature gesture when saying "you're fired" made him famous. He even used it during his rallies. "Nuclear edition" is a reference to the explosive situation in the White House and to the fact that Donald Trump has the codes to the Nuclear Football, the suitcase containing the nuclear codes and allowing the president to launch America's atomic devices. The source is, therefore, the TV show *the Apprentice* of which Donald Trump was the main feature. He is most famous for having fired several candidates with little to no explanations. And it was because he was already renowned through this show among other things that he was endorsed as the Republican candidate, also because as in *the Apprentice* he was rumoured to be a successful business genius and promised to deal with America as he would with a company. The target is the White House compared to the show, and Donald Trump, the president, still acting as the show featured CEO. The connector here between the target (the situation) and the source (*The Apprentice*) is verbal with the phrase "you're fired".

The reference to TV shows can also be used as a bridge between generations as seen in the following example also by Bill Maher:

(7) I feel like I'm binge watching the fall of the Roman Empire set to the music from Benny Hill.

"Binge-watching" is a recent term derived from "binge drinking", drinking drink after drink. Binge-

³⁷ *The Apprentice* is an American television show. The aim was to judge the business skills of fourteen to eighteen contestants. The show lasted for fifteen seasons. Donald Trump hosted the first fourteen. He stopped after announcing his candidacy to the Presidential Elections of 2016.

watching is today a cultural reality and related to TV or web series that can be binge-watched on streaming platforms like Netflix, PrimeVideo or (more recently) Disney+. "The music from Benny Hill" also relates to television. It refers to the theme music of the *Benny Hill Show* a British comedy show starring Benny Hill from 1955 to 1989. The theme music usually accompanies comical footage like bloopers. Those references can also align two generations for it represents two different times, the Millennials (also the gen Z) and the generations before. The last element is the "fall of the Roman Empire" a historical event with cataclysmic proportion, for it marks the end of a historical era and marked the beginning of the Middle Ages. The source and the target are in several folds, and each element has links to its counterpart. "Binge-watch" relates to the endless news cycle covering the events that occurred that specific week; "fall of the Roman Empire" relates to the event itself, and all the events reported since that could potentially have explosive consequences; "set to the music from Benny Hill" relates to the comical aspect of the situation. Trump and his allies contradict themselves without acknowledging when they could be wrong. They insist and persist which renders the whole situation comical.

The parallel between TV and real-life events is essential in this corpus. However, Stephen Colbert favours it more. Bill Maher and John Oliver are more politically inclined. Even though Bill Maher does use references in a highly elaborated way, another theme, as widely used as TV and fiction references throughout the corpus is History (and political references).

6.2 Political and historical references

As seen with the previous example and more specifically, the mention of the "fall of the Roman Empire" this corpus also refers to history and politics. The four speakers use those references but not to the same extent, some favour recent History or political parallels, others go further in the past. However, those references are not random and can be analysed further in terms of sources and targets.

According to the corpus statistics, 27% of the items make historical or political parallels. John Oliver favours those references; they represent up to 32% of his examples. Bill Maher comes second with 28%, and Samantha Bee comes third with 26%. Stephen Colbert hovers at 18%.³⁸ As mentioned in the previous section, Stephen Colbert is the host of an entertainment show, the political and historical references are usually shallow and represent common knowledge. The sources used by the other three are more subtle and researched. They are sometimes references that left the mind of the audience and need reminding or obscure references, as John Oliver uses. It will

be the topic of chapters 7 and 8. Bill Maher, Samantha Bee and John Oliver are hosts of political comedy show, mainly satirical shows. Viewers of those show usually already have a strong knowledge about History and politics. The same is not true of the audience of entertainment shows. The first example is extracted from Stephen Colbert monologue and relates to the title aired by Fox News about James Comey's dismissal:

(8) "Or as Fox News put it, "James Comey resigns" easy mistake. Easy mistake. Obviously. It's easy to get things wrong on a breaking story. I mean, who can forget the "New York Herald's "Lincoln commits suicide."

Stephen Colbert, therefore, establishes a parallel between James Comey's dismissal and Abraham Lincoln's assassination.³⁹ The parallel is between the "dismissal" turned into "resignation", and the "murder" turned into "suicide". The two men could be put in parallel too, controversial and influential figures and especially the way they were "terminated". Lincoln died while watching a play, James Comey learned of his dismissal on TV. The other parallel established is that both men are Republicans and could be seen as enemies for current Republicans: Abraham Lincoln because he freed the slaves and James Comey for he was investigating Donald Trump's campaign. This event, Abraham Lincoln's assassination, is well-known in the US and does not need a lot of explanation for US viewers.

The second example to illustrate this section is an excerpt from Samantha Bee's show: *Full Frontal with Samantha Bee*. In this extract, she explains how James Comey's dismissal took place: a letter was sent to the FBI headquarters, "where he wasn't". He was in LA giving a speech to the LA office's FBI agents. After learning about his dismissal on TV, he was escorted to the airport (LAX) to board the FBI private plane and go back to Washington. This example relates to that "car-chase".

(9) he was in Los Angeles where he learned about his firing from a TV report, got on an SUV was slowly followed down the highway in a weird echo of the OJ chase, except not really because we know the president would never have fired his good friend "the juice".

How James Comey learned about his dismissal through TV features in this example. However, the

³⁹ Abraham Lincoln died April 15th 1865. The day before, John Wilkes Booth, an actor and Confederate spy shot him while Lincoln was attending a play.

element on which Samantha Bee put the emphasis is the car chase that followed. The "OJ chase" refers to the OJ Simpson murder case. He was convicted of the murder of his ex-wife and her companion on 17 June 1994. However, he did not come to court. A slow car-chase followed. It resulted in his arrest. The car-chase was then broadcast on the news channel. The parallel is made through the car chase but also between the relationships between OJ Simpsons and Donald Trump and between James Comey and Donald Trump. OJ Simpson was a famous American footballer in the 1990s nicknamed "the Juice".⁴⁰ OJ Simpson and Donald Trump were friends. James Comey and Donald Trump had a complicated relationship. As FBI director during the election campaign, James Comey revealed some controversial information about then-candidate Hillary Clinton: she allegedly sent professional emails from a personal computer. This revelation is believed to have cost her the election. Donald Trump was then grateful, however, James Comey started investigating the Russian influence into Donald Trump's campaign, even though Comey reassured Donald Trump that he was not himself under investigation, the then FBI director refused to stop his research when the president asked, which resulted into his dismissal.

Historical and political references can be used to help the audience apprehend events, regarding their impact and the echos they have in history and along the political spectrum. In this corpus, the four speakers use those references but to a different extent. The last theme this chapter treats is more exclusive: sex.

6.3 Sex

Sex is what is known as a taboo termed discussion. In this corpus, there are only three occurrences of the use of sex. But because they are significant in their use they deserve a section of their own. The benefit is different from one speaker to the other and used to make different points; one of the speakers also does not use this theme.

Sex counts for only 4% of the overall corpus, meaning three examples. Bill Maher, Samantha Bee and John Oliver each use it for one comparison. Stephen Colbert does not use it. It could relate to the fact that Stephen Colbert's show is featured on network television and not cable television. The difference lies in the themes and vocabulary used. Stephen Colbert can not swear, nor use insult, nor provide sexual or violent content. John Oliver and Bill Maher, on the other hand, operate on HBO, famous for its depiction of sex or violence, the prime example being the hit show *Game of Thrones*⁴¹. *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*, *Real Time with Bill Maher* and *Full Frontal with*

40 The nickname "The Juice" probably comes from his initials OJ. In informal English (US), the letters "OJ" usually refers to Orange Juice.

41 *Games of Thrones* is the TV adaptation of the the book series *A Song of Ice and Fire* by George R.R. Martin. The

Samantha Bee are classified as TV-MA. In the United States, this signals that a program is "specifically designed to be viewed by adults". On the other hand, Stephen Colbert's show aims at a larger audience with the age rating TV-14, that make it suitable for young people over the age of fourteen. The fact that young people from the age of 14 can watch the show make it difficult for the speaker to mention sex, if not impossible. Both Maher and Bee are direct in their use of sex-related references. Consider the following example from *Full Frontal*:

(10) This is what happens when you've abstained from your phone for nine days, you ejaculate just like that.

The parallel here is between Donald Trump's use of Twitter and sexual release. It is a recurrent rhetoric that tweeting for Donald Trump is more of an urge than for the average citizen. Amid an intense period of stress and after nine days of not being authorized to use his twitter account, the US President Trump tweeted the word "Covfefe". Instead of acknowledging that he made a mistake and explaining what that word meant, he and his surrogate chose to ignore it. This "accident" is put with the ones that sometimes occurs after a long period of sexual abstinence followed by rapid arousal. In this comparison, the word "abstained" is even used by pushing this parallel. The fact that a female comedian is using this parallel could be explained by the fact that it is still taboo for men to acknowledge this type of dysfunction. Therefore, a part of Samantha Bee's style is to be able to mention topics that men do not feel comfortable mentioning. Problems that usually impact women more than they affect men.

John Oliver has another approach to the subject. His reference to sex is more elaborated, and more parallels can be drawn between the source and the target of his narrative comparison. John Oliver is referring to a comment by Fox News anchor Tucker Carlson, that according to John Oliver, tried to talk the scandal (James Comey's Dismissal) out of existence by comparing it to money and sex scandals. After comparing Carlson rhetoric to a "Jedi Mind trick"⁴², he compares it too embarrassed parents trying to talk a traumatic experience for a child out of existence. Consider the following example:

(11) He's talking to his viewers like a parent whose kids just walked in on them sixty-nining. "This isn't what you think this isn't what you're looking at, your mother and I were listening to see if there's an echo when you scream into a butt. Nothing is

show aired on HBO from 2011 to 2019.

⁴² This is a reference to the *Star Wars franchise* and the ability some characters – the Jedi – have to manipulate people's thought using only words and a hand gestures.

hapening here.

The comparison is three-fold and might relate to the dynamic of covering for the scandal. It is a scandal that anybody could witness. It was all over the news at the time. In the comparisons, this relates to a child "walking in on his parents sixty-nining". The child is the witness of a mutually beneficial sexual act. Sexual means it is taboo as dismissing the FBI director. And mutually beneficial could relate to Trump's surrogate into saying that it is not such a big deal, they ensure their position in the White House and stay in the president good graces by defending him and his actions. There is then the incitation to forget what happened "this isn't what you think, this isn't what you're looking at". It is parallel to the attempt by Tucker Carlson and Trump senior staff to make people unsee what they saw and unknow what they know. And when this strategy does not work, they explain: "your mother and I were listening to see if there's an echo when you scream into a butt" can relate to the explanation given that Donald Trump's actions were at the recommendation of then-Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, even though Rosenstein had the power to dismiss James Comey himself if the need arose. The last phrase: "Nothing is happening here" relates to the attempts of Trump's supporter to make the scandal go away by calling it unappealing and minimising it. The choice of a sexual comparison could be that of comparing a taboo and embarrassing situation – children bearing witness to their parent's sexual acts – to another – dismissing the FBI director James Comey for personal and not judiciary reasons.

Sex is taboo when talking to a young audience which is why Stephen Colbert, host of a TV-14 rated show, cannot use this topic. However, the other three do it. Even if for each speaker, there is only one example. Samatha Bee uses a common analogy in the tech world: Twitter as a sexual release and attributes it to the President. John Oliver uses an embarrassing possible encounter between parents and children to explain the controversy around James Comey's dismissal.

6.4 Summary

This chapter treated the themes used in this corpus. The first theme the most used, "everyday life" was not mentioned for it does not help differentiate the speakers. The other three – Television culture, Political and historical references and sex – do. As the four speakers are on Television, televisual culture is an important theme. However, Stephen Colbert host of an entertainment show favours it more than the other three. The importance of television culture is even more so paramount under the Trump Era, for Donald Trump was a TV-reality star before being a candidate for the presidential elections. Bill Maher uses that fact as the base of one of his comparisons.

Television can also be used to bridge the generation gap using references as "binge-watching" and "Benny Hill" in the same comparison. John Oliver, on the other hand, favours political and historical references. His show is purely political. However, Stephen Colbert uses a parallel between James Comey's dismissal and Abraham Lincoln Assassination to comment on a Fox News announcement. He then creates a parallel to James Comey's Fox News "resignation" and a fictional Lincoln "suicide". Samantha Bee also compares James Comey to the criminal OJ Simpson by putting in parallel the slow car-chase that led to OJ Simpson's arrest and James Comey's escort to the airport. The last theme, sex, is not treated by Stephen Colbert for his show's age rating is TV-14 which makes it impossible to use language relating to sex. Samantha Bee uses it to explain Donald Trump's relationship with the social network Twitter. John Oliver uses this theme to describe Fox News strategy after the controversial termination of James Comey as FBI director. It is not only the themes that help differentiate the speaker but also the way they use those themes.

7. DEVICES USED

As seen in the previous chapter, historical references and political parallels pertain to all the speakers. However, they are not used the same way by each speaker. For this chapter, and the following one, the emphasis will be on the different structures used by each speaker. The present chapter will take a closer look on the even and simple systems, and the following chapter will focus on the more complex ones. The author of this paper has chosen to classify the simple structures into three categories: simple comparisons, even parallels and simple name-calling. Those categories and simple systems, in general, are the most widely used by the speakers but differently by each of them. Even parallels and simple comparisons are different in the number and treatment of the elements they contain. What we dubb a simple comparison, is a comparative structure that includes both target and source (even implicitly) or that the context help infers the missing piece of information. It also contains one common characteristic or one connecting word and nothing more. Even parallel, as the simple comparison, include both target and source, implicitly or explicitly and a list of two or more characteristics that put source and target in parallel without connecting words. Simple Name-calling relates to a phrase or utterance that consists of one noun – the name-calling – and a qualifier to help identify the target. Simple comparison and simple name-calling are the subjects of the third section of this chapter. The first two sections explore the use of even parallel depending on the speaker and the message they are trying to get across.

7.1 Comparing events

As mentioned above, even parallel represent 21% of comparisons. As for themes, they are not used to the same extent by the speakers. They represent 18% of Bill Maher utterances, 25% of John Oliver utterances and 42% of Stephen Colbert's statements. Samantha Bee does not use this device. It could be explained by Samantha Bee's situation as a foreigner in the US for three years at the time (against eleven for John Oliver). The starting point of the present research was a video by John Oliver "Stupid Watergate". The comparison is in the title. It is what this paper refers to as an even parallel. Even though the formula resembles what we dubbed simple comparisons, the word "Watergate" entails much more characteristics than it first seems. Also, the procedure is not on its own as part of a sentence:

(12) Stupid Watergate: a scandal with all the potential ramifications of Watergate, but where everyone involved is stupid and bad at everything.

Watergate was a scandal involving Republican President Richard Nixon. In 1972, during the presidential elections, the Watergate building housing the Democratic Party Headquarters was burglarized. The burglars had links to the presidential campaign of Richard Nixon. Nixon and his aides tried to obstruct justice. In parallel, Nixon and his aids would render themselves guilty of abuse of power and use their influence on the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for their benefice. Those events were known as the Watergate Scandal. Other events occurred amid the Watergate scandal. The White House was wiretapped, and Nixon refused to release the tapes. After being forced to by the Supreme Court, he resigned.

The parallel between the Watergate Scandal can lie on several elements. First, the source of the conflict between James Comey and President Donald J Trump was the FBI's investigation of Trump's presidential campaign. The Watergate scandal started with controversial campaign methods. Then, President Trump obstructed justice by repeatedly asking James Comey to stop his investigation on Flynn. He then fires James Comey when the latter refused to do so. The parallel that is the most obvious to a journalist, however, is the parallel between James Comey's termination as head of the FBI and what is known as the Saturday Night Massacre. To conduct the investigation, Nixon appointed Archibald Cox as a special prosecutor to investigate the scandal. However, when the investigation closed in on him, he attempted to have him dismissed, which led to the resignation of both Attorney General Elliot Richardson and Deputy Attorney General William D. Ruckelshaus. Those events are known as the Saturday Night massacre. For numerous Journalists, James Comey's dismissal is an echo to those events as James Comey was dismissed for supervising the investigation, Donald Trump wanted to see stopped.

However, in this example, the comparison is incomplete for the situation is dubbed "stupid Watergate". The speaker (and writers) recognised the similarities between the two. However, the word "stupid" could underline the fact that the Watergate Scandal and everything that followed was covert and the attempt to hide the corruption was successful to a certain extent. In the case of James Comey's dismissal and the week that followed, the corruption was overt, for not perceived as corruption by those committing the deeds and trying to cover for the president.

Parallels like this one are even but not complete. They are also straightforward and easy to grasp for those aware of American political history. The resemblance here is diachronic, they can also be synchronic, and therefore be between two entities, in the following section, between two countries.

7.2 Political parallels

A parallel can be synchronic as well as diachronic. Synchronic even parallels compare two political entities. This type of comparisons helps share a perspective by explaining a political system in terms of another. Consider the following example by Stephen Colbert:

(13) I can explain our government to the people of Qatar: America is run by a group of powerful men, many of whom are very religious, doing whatever they can to protect their oil industry, I'm not sure you can relate.

Stephen Colbert, in this extract comments on Donald Trump's visit to Qatar.

Qatar is known to be an absolute monarchy. The Qataris that count for only 11% of the population are in charge of the country. It is a Muslim majority country and even though other religions are authorized, Muslim Qataris are the only ones able to fill in positions of power. Like many countries in the region (Middle East), their economy relies heavily on oil business-ship deals with western countries. Gender equality is also far from being achieved in the country. As an example, women can not drive yet.

The parallel between Qatar and America is established; however, through implicatures. Indeed, the situation of Qatar: absolute monarchy, a misogynistic and highly religious society focused on the interest of the Oil Industry, is often used to criticise Qatar. Those elements of their culture are well-known. When Stephen Colbert describes America the same way Qatar is usually described, he creates a parallel between the two countries. Qatar and its neighbour, Saudi Arabia, are typically viewed as opposites to the American way of life. The similarity goes to show that the current political situation in the US is filling the gap between the two models. "Group of powerful men" refers to the Government, and Mike Pence's rhetoric about women, but also a famous picture released a few weeks before James Comey's dismissal. This picture staged the committee for women's rights, all middle-aged white men, in the room to discuss abortion rights. "Very religious" has to primarily refer to Mike Pence, whose religious belief forbids him for being alone in a room with a woman that is not his wife. Donald Trump also mentions very often God and the bible even though most of the members of the White House do not necessarily abide by the bible rules (regarding unfaithfulness, for example). "Oil Industry" might also refer to Donald Trump's administration back paddling on renewable energies and promoting the production and use of fossil fuels as oil or coal, promising during his campaign to relaunch both industries.

As Bill Maher did with examples (1) and (2) the United States of America is here compared to a totalitarian regime. When Bill Maher used puns, Stephen Colbert uses a more elaborate comparative structure: even parallel.

7.3 Simple structures

With 34% of comparisons and 59% of name-calling, simple structures are the most used in this corpus. Simple comparisons are the favoured tool of Samantha Bee with 55% of her comparisons being simple comparisons. Stephen Colbert is the one that less uses it with 17% of his utterances. Bill Maher and John Oliver compare in their use with respectively 34% and 31%. Simple name-calling is equally favoured by Bill Maher and Samantha Bee with 86% of their examples being simple, Stephen Colbert is the one less using them the with 30%, and John Oliver is above average with 67%. A simple structure can also be elaborate in meaning. It is the case with the two examples detailed in this section.

Example (14) is extracted from "Stupid Watergate" performed by John Oliver and is analysed as a simple comparison:

(14) Say what you want about Nixon, at least he wanted the fucking job

In this example, a parallel is established between Donald Trump and Richard Nixon. In this extract, it occurs after John Oliver shows a picture of Trump's victory dinner, where he does not seem to be thrilled to be in the room. The parallel between the two is, of course, an echo to the similarity between James Comey's dismissal and the Watergate Scandal. However, unlike the one explained in the previous section, this one concerns people and not an idea or a concept like a country. The comparison is then more personal. And the butt of the joke here is Donald Trump and the fact that he did not seem to want the presidency. It can be supported by the fact that President Trump called his election campaign publicly as "the biggest promotion ever". The attack within this comparison is therefore personal.

Example (15) by Samantha Bee is also a simple structure but not a comparison: name-calling. It is dubbed "simple" for the direct correspondence between the target and the source, however, several people are targeted within the same utterance:

(15) Ignorance, chaos, hubris, suspicion and contempt, or as they're also known: Trump senior staff"



Fig 6. Trump's senior staff

The terms "Ignorance, chaos, hubris, suspicion and contempt" are uttered by a Fox News anchor to complain about James Comey's investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 elections. Samantha Bee then turns those terms onto Donald Trump's senior staff. We are dealing here with a comparative name-calling structure. An image accompanies the comparison itself. Each element is attributed to a member of Donald Trump senior staff. "Ignorance" is attributed to Sean Spicer, Press secretary to the White House at the time. The main event of most press conferences was his signature phrases: "I have not discussed this with the president" or "I am not aware of this" which led journalists to think that he was either lying or oblivious to everything that would happen in the White House. "Chaos" is attributed to Steven Bannon, an adviser to the White House at the time. His declarations were often confusing or contradictory. Jared Kushner is used to illustrating "hubris". Kushner is Donald Trump's son-in-law and top adviser to the White House. He is also responsible for a lot of tasks as health or peace in the Middle East. Reince Priebus, White House chief of staff at the time, is attributed the word "suspicion" probably because of the way he always questions the sources and intents of people addressing him. The last one "contempt" is attributed to Stephen Miller, a top adviser to the president. Satirists often criticise Stephen Miller for his "vampire-like" features. His association with the word "contempt" probably comes from his general demeanour. Those attributions are visibly and notably personal attacks on several members of Trump's senior staff.

The simple structure is the most used in this corpus by all four speakers. Their different use,

depending on the speaker, help differentiate between the speaker. Simple name-calling and simple comparisons, even though, in the present corpus, they are still jokes and therefore ambiguous they are the most straightforward.

7.4 Summary

Chapter 7 explored the simple structures used in the corpus. The exact parallel, for example, can be used to compare events or political systems. The first section exposed a diachronic parallel made between James Comey's dismissal and the Watergate scandal. The distance between the two events help put the first one (chronologically) into perspective and therefore better suited to explain the more recent one. In example (12), the parallel is not complete; a nuance is added by the use of the adjective "stupid". That difference is used to apprehend the target of the comparison better. Even parallels can also be synchronic. In example (13) two countries are compared: the US and Qatar. It relates to the primary definition of a metaphor: describing an element or entity (target) through the characteristics of another (source). By this mean, the speaker exposes his/her perspective and share their point of view. The main argument here, as in examples (1) and (2) is that the US has become a totalitarian regime as Nicaragua, Banana Republics, and Qatar are. The third section explored the most widely used type of structures: simple comparisons and simple name-calling. Simple comparisons make up for 34% of comparisons and simple name-callings for 59% of all name-callings. In this structure, the parallel between source and target is straightforward, relying on only one element and is not open to interpretation. Chapter 8 deals with complex comparative systems. Less widely used than simple structures, they are more elaborate, involve more factors and demand more understanding and political knowledge. They are detailed in both form and content.

8. COMPLEX COMPARATIVES STRUCTURES

As seen in chapter 7, simple structures are used by the four speakers and even favoured in the corpus. However, there are also more complex structures. For this corpus, name-calling fit into two categories: simple (as explained in chapter 7) and complex. Complex name-callings have a more elaborated system. Example (3) is complex name-calling. Complex name-calling is the subject of section one. Comparisons can also fit into two categories: simple and complex. Simple, as seen in chapter 7, was divided once more into even parallels and simple comparisons. Complex comparisons fit into three subcategories: uneven comparisons, multi-comparisons and narrative comparisons. The latter will be the subject of section 10.1. Uneven comparisons are comparisons that contain one source and several targets and vice -versa, and where the equality between source and target is not respected. They have unequal values—a multi-comparison has a similar construction in terms of quantity but, not quality. Source and target are assigned the same worth. Uneven comparisons and multi-comparisons belong in sections 8.2 and 8.3.

8.1 Simple name-calling versus complex name-calling

In their use of name-calling, the four speakers differ from each other. The average usage is 32%. Stephen Colbert favours it for it composes 45% of examples extracted from his show. John Oliver is the one that uses this device the less with 16%, meaning three utterances. Samatha Bee is closer to Stephen Colbert rate with 42%, and Bill Maher is bellow average with 29%. Another difference is that when three of the speakers have a higher rate of simple name-calling, Stephen Colbert is the opposite. 70% of the name-callings he uses are complex. Three examples will occur in this section: simple name-calling on its own, simple name-calling as part of a sentence, and then complex name-calling.

Consider the following example from Bill Maher's show:

(16) President Batshit

"Batshit" is capitalised to signal that the speaker, Bill Maher, considers it to be a family name. In American English slang whether it is the noun or the adjective (they share the same form) the word designates something insane. The title President is used here to signal the person we're talking about. The designation "Batshit", renders the opinion the speaker has about the President. The

target here is assumed to be US President Donald Trump. This name-calling is a simple construction, the noun phrase with "Batshit" as the head.

The last example was taken on its own for it does not need the rest of the sentence to have meaning, the next one - from Samantha Bee - does.

(17) Comey's a bit of a turd but at least he is an independent one.

James Comey was a controversial figure especially to the democrats because of his role in Hillary Clinton's defeat. He is also a Republican. However, his investigation on Hillary Clinton and then on, Donald Trump proved to the general public that he was, as his job title required, independent. The noun "turd" here is an insult; it designates James Comey and probably relates to the fact that he is a Republican and cost Hillary Clinton the elections. However, the phrase "independent one" lessens the blow by acknowledging his quality as non-partisan when it comes to his occupation as FBI director. This name-calling is softened by this phrase, and more elaborate for it is part of a sentence. However, the name-calling still relies on one word as does the previous example: "Batshit" and "turd".

What the author means by complex structure is a structure including both target and source, a form closer to comparison than classic name-calling as in the following example extracted from Stephen Colbert's show:

(18) Press Secretary and original Boss Baby, Sean Spicer

The two previous examples did not have strong implicatures, the nouns used – "Batshit" and "turd" – are self-explanatory. This one is more complex. First and foremost, the name-calling is inserted into a none-humouristic phrase, a formal one "Press Secretary Sean Spicer". This insert shows a dichotomy in the mind of the speaker. Whereas the previous two examples did not offer an alternative, this one does and gives two identities for the butt of the joke: an official title, and an animation film character. Its left context modifies the insult itself. In the previous two examples the offences were qualified: "President Batshit" and "Independent turd". Here "Boss Baby" is modified by the adjective "original". One explanation could be that "Batshit" and "turd" are generic terms when "Boss Baby" is specific to a character⁴³. However, as Michael Flynn was not exactly Sam the Eagle but a copy, Sean Spicer is not "Boss Baby" but the original. It implies that Sean Spicer is not

43 *The Boss Baby* is an animated film released in 2017 by DreamWorks Animation Studios staging a newborn baby that is in fact a secret agent.

perceived as an adult by the speaker. He did not use the term "adult" Boss Baby. The physical traits could also be taken into account. However, the theme of the movie, the "Boss Baby" character is a baby acting like an adult, while still being a baby. Perhaps the use of the modifier "original" is there to imply that Sean Spicer's behaviour inspired this character during press briefings.

Name-calling that contains the target and does not involve a lot of thinking process is considered simple. Name-calling that is closer to a comparative structure with both source and targets present in the utterance is complex. Comparisons also are not necessarily simple. They can sometimes be complexified by not respecting the balance in terms of data and implicature between source and target.

8.2 Uneven comparisons

An uneven comparison, in this corpus, is a comparison that contrasts one source to several targets as an example (19) or several sources to one target as in (20). In both cases, there is an imbalance in value given to the sources and targets provided by the speaker. However, the value is not only numerical, but it is also in the content: comparing several serious offences or topics to light ones. Only two speakers use this category of comparisons: Bill Maher (1 utterance) and John Oliver (2 utterances). Example (19) is an excerpt from *Real Time with Bill Maher*:

(19) Trump fires the chief investigator into Russia, then he invites the Russians into his oval office the next morning, kicks out the American media, but has the Russian state-run press there, and confesses to obstruction of justice on live TV. But Hillary sent some emails from the wrong laptop.

This example counts two sentences. The first one contains four elements concerning Donald Trump's presidency. Four controversial actions that occurred over one week with potentially devastating consequences. In the US, inviting Russian officials in the Oval Office is controversial for the US and Russia, when it was still the USSR were enemies. Refusing the presence of the American press while authorising the Russian one knowing that the chances were slim that anything would be shared with the US media gave the impression that what they would discuss would not be accepted by the general public. The following days, Donald Trump confessed to obstruction of justice, and it was also leaked that he reassured the Russian dignitaries by telling them that firing James Comey took care of the Russia investigation. The speaker here chose to make it echo with the revelation that might have cost Hillary Clinton the election: she sent

classified e-mails from an unsecured laptop, and when the FBI asked for those e-mails they were missing. This comparison is, therefore, uneven. By listing wrongdoings and comparing them to only one occurrence, of the adversaries wrongdoing, give the audience a feeling of unfairness. It also simplifies and reduces to its essence a tricky situation.

In that example, what is interesting to note is that there is one source - Hillary sending emails from the wrong laptop – and four targets. The following example (20) multiplies the sources while there is only one target:

(20) Wait no politician has been treated worse! Abraham Lincoln was shot by an actor; William McKinley was shot by an anarchist; JFK was of course murdered by Ted Cruz's father; and James Garfield was shot then to find the bullet, and this is true, Alexander Graham Bell devised the kind of metal detector which didn't work, so doctors try to fish around in his guts for the bullet, with unwashed fingers which just made his infection worse, so he died in horrible pain. But yeah Alec Baldwin sometimes does mean impressions of you on TV! So yeah basically the same isn't it.

In this example, John Oliver uses a device similar to that of Bill Maher, an uneven comparison. However, the goal seems to be different. This comparison is a comment on Donald Trump's declaration that no "politician in history has been treated worse". Instead of listing events attributed to Donald Trump and comparing them to one occurrence, John Oliver uses historical knowledge to prove the President wrong. The emphasis is on "treated worse". He uses the example of four politicians and put them so that makes the situations grow from bad to worse. All the "treatment" resulted in the death of the politicians from a few hours of coma to excruciating agony. Those death are compared to a recurrent character in the satirical show *Saturday Night Live*, performed by actor Alec Baldwin. This character is the caricatural version of the American President Donald Trump. John Oliver even uses this extended comparison to add a mockery. For the first two elements of the list, John Oliver mentions characteristics of the assassins: "an actor"; "an anarchist" however for the third politician – John F. Kennedy – for the investigation is still ongoing he uses one of Donald Trump's theory: "Ted Cruz⁴⁴'s father".

The three instances of uneven comparisons are political or historically themed. The element important in uneven comparisons is that targets and sources are not equal in the shared opinion between speaker and audience. It is where uneven comparisons differ from multi-comparisons. They are similar in structures but not in content.

44 Ted Cruz is the Governor of Texas, that opposed Trump at the time.

8.3 Multi-comparisons

Multi-comparisons are used by three of the speakers. Indeed Samantha Bee does not use them. She uses solely narrative and simple comparisons. Bill Maher uses that structure in 3 utterances; Stephen Colbert in 2 utterances as well as John Oliver. They all have in common that one target has several sources. However, the target is not always explicit in the utterance. In most cases, this structure attacks a person in particular or words they uttered. Both (21) and (22) are personal attacks. (21) denounces a person and (22) a person's declaration.

The first is extracted from *Last Week Tonight*:

(21) He is the least interesting human on earth. He is the person equivalent of an empty room painted eggshel. He's like a white bread sandwich where the middle is just a third slice of white bread.

This utterance relates to Jared Kushner, a little bit of context is necessary for this is a reinvention of the idiom "person of interest". Indeed, amid the Russia investigation, the investigators mentioned their will to interrogate a person of interest close to Donald Trump. The rumour was that it was his son-in-law and top White House official Jared Kushner. By these comparisons, Oliver explicitly declares that Jared Kushner is not an exciting person. He then compares Kushner – the target – to two uninteresting things: a white room and a white bread sandwich. Unlike in the two previous examples, neither the source nor the victim is given more weight in the utterance. Indeed, Jared Kushner is equally compared to a white room as the white area is compared to him. It is, therefore, a multi-comparison for the equality is not established between two objects but among the three of them. Multi-comparisons can also involve several sources and no target, at least not a visible one.

Consider the following example from *The late Show with Stephen Colbert*:

(22) Paper or plastic? That was me! I call a left turn a "louie". How's is it hanging? No one wondered how it hung before me. Chocoholic. You are the weakest link. Goodbye.

This example is a comment on Donald Trump's declaration on TV that he invented the phrase "priming the pump". Colbert answers by a compilation of standard terms that the president could pretend he invented. The utterance occurs in a Donald Trump's mimic voice. Here the target is not included; however, the statement is composed of only sources. None of those utterances has more

importance than the others.

What multi-comparisons and uneven comparisons have in common is that the target of the joke undergoes an attack on a declaration they made. They fall victim to criticism for terms they used or justification they gave. By listing several elements in contrast to only one, the satirists use a satirical device: *Reductio ad absurdum*. It is a rhetorical device that consists of stretching the incongruent argument to the extent that exposes the ridicule of it.⁴⁵

Multi comparison can, therefore, take several forms as do uneven comparisons. However, they have that in common that they attack a personality or a political stance. They are used to put weight onto the satirist rhetoric. In both cases, there is an imbalance created between target and sources. However, uneven comparisons are used to highlight an inequality already acknowledged; still, multi-comparisons uses the cover of equality to create an imbalance in the audience's collective mind. Multiplying the sources is a form of insistence on the ridicule of the target. This numerical imbalance is then used to exaggerate someone or something's ridiculous aspects.

8.4 Summary

Examples (16), (17) and (18) represent three different forms of name-calling. (16) is simple name-calling, there is a direct correspondance between source and target. The ambiguity contains in it is subtle and not open to interpretation. Example (17) is also an example of simple name-calling; however, it is more complicated than (16). Even though it is not open to interpretation, it is modified by an adjective, when (16) was qualified by a noun. (18) is a more complex structure. The name-calling is framed by two neutral phrases pointing to the same target. In this case, name-calling is closer to comparison than just a creative and offensive nickname. Uneven comparisons are also complex systems of comparative structure. They attribute several targets to one source or vice-versa creating a sense of inequality between victim and authorities. The implicature here is that the comparison is not balanced and should not even be tempted. More often than not, even comparisons are comments on a comparison made by the butt of the joke. Multi-comparisons are close to uneven comparisons in structures, however not in content. Multi-comparisons always have only one target, not necessarily explicit, and compare it to several sources of equal value. It adds to the "banality" of the victim. As mentioned earlier, more complex name-calling could thin the differences between comparison and name-calling. This difference even more difficult to perceive when satirists use references to children folklore.

45 Colletta, Lisa. "Political Satire and Postmodern Irony in the Age of Stephen Colbert and Jon Stewart." *The Journal of Popular Culture* 42.5 (2009): 856-74. Print.

9. DONALD TRUMP AND THE WORLD OF CHILDHOOD

As seen in the previous chapter, the source of comparisons can have an impact on how we view a person or an event. It is a form of manipulation. The argument, argued by journalists and satirists, is that Donald Trump and his staff act like children when confronted with difficulties or the consequences (and more often than not backlash) of their decisions. The world of childhood and children folklore is part of this corpus. 16% of the total number of examples relates to child folklore. It is not used as a theme for the whole children world is explored: everyday life, TV shows, literature...It is not a theme as much as a background. John Oliver is the only out of the four to use it only once and as a generic reference using the noun "baby". The other three do it in a more specific way as (23), (24) and (25) show. Samantha Bee used it in two utterances, Bill Maher in two occurrences, and Stephen in eight of them. This chapter contains three sections, each treats an example from a different speaker. Each example illustrates a different recourse to child folklore.

9.1 Name-calling or comparison

As seen in previous chapters, Stephen Colbert is creative when it comes to name-calling. He favours complex structures and multilayered content. Great care is always associated with his choices. Another particularity of this speaker is for name-calling, he often uses fictional references, and more often than not, a character written for a young audience as in (3) and (18). In this example, what seems to be a crude insult turns out to be much more complex and layered:

(23) I think he was fired because Comey couldn't guess the name Rumpelstiltskin.

"Rumpelstiltskin" here is a reference to Jeff Sessions: former Attorney General who recused himself from the Flynn Investigation, prompting James Comey and then Special prosecutor Robert Mueller to conduct the investigation instead. "Rumpelstiltskin", in a fairytale written by the Grimm brothers, is a dwarf that was promised a baby by a young woman. He loves making deals, so he promised the woman he would not take the baby if she could guess his name within three trials. She did, he lost. This character was made famous in recent years by the TV series *Once Upon a Time*⁴⁶ but also by the fourth instalment of the franchise *Shrek*⁴⁷. In the series, the character is on

⁴⁶ *Once upon a Time* from 2011 to 2018.

⁴⁷ *Shrek franchise* four films were released in 2001, 2004, 2007 and 2010 for the fourth.

the main cast. He is portrayed by Robert Carlyle whose performance made the character multidimensional and memorable. The series was still airing at the time. Rumpelstiltskin in *Shrek 4* is closer to Jeff Sessions in physical appearance.



Fig. 7: Jeff Sessions, official portrait



Fig 8: Rumpelstiltskin in "Shrek 4"



Fig 9. Robert Carlyle as Rumpelstiltskin in "Once Upon A Time"

Physical traits make the parallel between Rumpelstiltskin and Jeff Sessions at first. However, children literature has legions of odd-looking dwarfs that could serve as fictional equivalents of Jeff Sessions. The modern image of Rumpelstiltskin has him as a multifaceted man making deals and never breaking them, always keeping true to his words while working a personal angle, the comparison is more resonant than merely a physical parallel. Indeed, as Attorney General, Jeff Sessions makes deals, plea bargains, and political alliances. Recusing himself from the investigation because of unspecified conflicts of interest also proves that he is true to his word. One could also argue that he did not want his interests spoiled by the investigation. He was, therefore, working a personal angle.

The use of a child figure could also demystify politics. Stephen Colbert here uses common physical traits between the former Attorney General Jess Sessions and an animated character. However, the similarity in general demeanour is a starting point to a deeper comparison of their habits and personalities. The following example focuses on characters public image rather than their actual nature.

9.2 Donald Trump as a fairy tale character

In example (24), Samantha Bee compares Donald Trump to Tinker Bell, a fairy from children literature. It can seem odd. However, the possible reasoning behind this choice can enlighten the audience on Samantha Bee's point of view concerning Donald Trump and his influence on his

followers:

(24) Trump without screaming mobs and Twitter is like Tinker Bell without clapping; he'll flutter to the ground and wink out.

This example is an extract from Samantha Bee's show, *Full Frontal*. It is a reference to the fact that at the beginning of President Trump's term, his aid and senior staff were trying to ease his campaign attitude. In doing so, they cancelled a few rallies and stopped him from tweeting for nine days. It was a way to reduce the investigation into Jared Kushner. However, it was already clear early in his term that it would not last long. It was also clear that campaign rallies and his Twitter feed were Donald Trump's way to deal with his presidency, the ability for him to say what he wished unprompted and unvetted. Here potentially dangerous tools as "screaming mobs" and "Twitter" are associated with something innocent as clapping hands. "Twitter" can be potentially dangerous for it is unmonitored, the risk was low when Donald Trump was a regular citizen; however, as Commander in Chief, it could have devastating effects. It was the fear at the time. That fear has eased down, for only a few take his tweets seriously even his declarations of war (against North Korea or Canada for example). The phrase "screaming mobs" is also deliberate; they could have used the terms "cheering crowds". The word "screaming" suggests something loud, unstructured and ununderstandable. The term "mob" is essential in this declaration, for it means something potentially dangerous. A mob suggest "a large angry, crowd that could potentially become violent" (Cambridge dictionary). "screaming mobs" and "Twitter" are put in parallel with "clapping". "Clapping" suggests something softer, innocent even.

Donald Trump is more often than not compared to a child because of his behaviour and argumentative habits ("it was not me", "I did what I was told"...). However, here he is compared to a figure of children folklore: Tinker Bell. Tinker Bell is a beloved character. Created by J.M Barrie for his play *Peter Pan* it was made even more famous by Disney Studios when they adapted to the big screen in 1953. Several adaptations (*Peter Pan*, 2003), sequels (*Hook*, 1991), prequels (*Pan*, 2015) or rewriting as part of a bigger story (*Once Upon A Time*, 2011 – 2018) help make that story present in everybody's mind and all of them (except for *Pan*) stage the fairy Tinker Bell. One well-known part of the story of *Peter Pan* is when Tinker Bell drinks poison destined to the eponymous character. She "flutters to the ground and winks out" only to be revived by children clapping and claiming they "do believe in fairies". The story says that fairies go extinct when enough children cease to believe in them. By comparing Donald Trump to Tinker Bell, the speaker establish the fact that Trump is as important a figure to his crowd as a fairytale character is to

children. It also compares his "screaming mobs" and Twitter following to children that might cease to believe in him if they do not hear from him anymore.

The references to Tinker Bell and the conditions of her existence being her "followers" belief in her can explain the parallel made here between that character and Donald Trump. Bill Maher also makes a parallel between Donald Trump and a beloved children's character. It is safe to assume that he shares Samantha Bee's idea on the strange relationship between Donald Trump and his followers.

9.3 Children's doctrine

For the title of this section, the use of the word "doctrine" is not random. It is about the example analysed here. It is also an echo to the use of children "belief" in magical beings to explain Donald Trump's surrogates beliefs in their leader. Children do believe in the existence of several magical creatures as the Easter Rabbit, the Tooth Fairy, the Sandman or Santa Claus. In the following example, Bill Maher, by comparing Donald Trump to the latter, might infer that the political figure is more fictional:

(25) And the Pope made a fat joke about him and the French guy said he won the handshaking, he says 'you guys are mean to me now you get coal'. What is it the Santa Claus doctrine?

Comparing political figures to children books characters is not the only way; the satirist created a parallel between the world of childhood and the situation.

In this example, Bill Maher comments on the reasons why Donald Trump pulled out of the Paris Agreement. The Paris Agreement is an agreement within the United Nations to keep the increase in global temperature within 2°C above pre-industrial levels. It is non-binding; however, most countries in the UN signed it except for the 14-member of Opec and conflicts torn countries have not yet ratified; however, they gave their accord. The US had sanctioned it. However, Donald Trump decided to withdraw from the agreement judging it too harsh on the US when the deal does not include any forms of enforcement. Donald Trump pretended that it would mean for the US to stop Coal production when it is not specified in the accord, and he declared that the other nations were thrilled when the agreement was signed because it would mean the ruin of the US.

In this example, Bill Maher implies that the reasons why Donald Trump withdrew from the Paris Accord was because he was upset of the way other nations treated him. While the First Lady visited

the Vatican with her husband, the Pope asked her what she was feeding her husband. He mentioned "potizza", a Slovenian fat and sugary pastry. This word and the overall amused demeanour of Pope Francis led critics to think he made a "fat joke" towards the President of the United States. While meeting French President Emmanuel Macron during the NATO summit, there was an incident. Donald Trump has made a habit of prolonging his handshake more than necessary to show dominance. However, Macron refused to let go "winning" the handshake in the mind of several journalists. Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris Accord was around the same time. Therefore, it seemed to be punishment against the nations of the world and especially those leaders as the Pope and the French President for not "respecting" Donald Trump the way he wishes to be respected, or for making him feel less than what he usually feels. Bill Maher reduces this rhetoric too: "you guys are mean to me, so you get coal". This phrase and the following "the Santa Claus Doctrine" compares Donald Trump to Santa Claus and Pope Francis and Macron to children on the infamous "naughty list" that counts the name of children that were not good and will receive coal in their stockings instead of presents.

Once more, as in the "Tinker Bell" example, Donald Trump is portrayed as a figure of children folklore while others are pictured as children he owes his existence to. The use of the word "doctrine" is also interesting. The Cambridge dictionary defines the term "doctrine" as follows: "a belief or set of beliefs, especially political or religious ones, that are taught and accepted by a particular group". In terms of Santa Claus, children are the group that do believe in this doctrine. The use of the word "doctrine" and the comparison between Donald Trump and Santa Claus could be an attempt to compare Trump's followers to children as the "Tinker Bell" example does.

In the last two examples, Donald Trump is compared to a fictional magical creature, and the comparisons seem to put the emphasis on his followers rather than onto him. Both Samantha Bee and Bill Maher seem to compare Donald Trump's followers to children.

9.4 Summary

Example (23) allied Jeff Sessions to a fairytale character Rumpelstiltskin. The physical appearance was the first feature of this comparison and related to the new physical representation of this character in people's mind. The role of Rumpelstiltskin in *Shrek 4* seems to be the source for the physical comparison and Rumpelstiltskin from the hit TV series *Once Upon a Time* seems to be the source of the personal comparison. The next two comparative structures in examples (24) and (25) seem to focus on Donald Trump's followers. The choices of "Tinker Bell" and "Santa Claus" underline the idea of (blind) belief. The existence of the magical being in both examples relies on

that belief being sustainable. So Donald Trump is a magical creature that would die without followers as Tinker Bell or the physical manifestation of an idea made concrete by believers as Santa Claus. In those examples, Donald Trump's followers are compared to children that want to believe. In case (24), the implicature is that this belief is conditional on permanent presence. Children folklore based comparisons pave the way for a sophisticated type of comparisons dubbed narrative comparisons and other manipulation of language to create another set of belief.

10. CREATIVE COMPARISONS

Linguistic manipulation is how humour is created. SSTH and GTVH focus on small strings and only on narrative jokes and puns. The main essence of fun is its creativity. Chapter 10 has for object three types of humour creativities: narrative comparisons, idiom misuse and creative metaphors. Narrative comparisons (or jokes) use narration and fiction as a source. It is usually relating to an everyday-life situation or a familiar situation (a TV trope, for example). The story told is typically short and represent one short scene. Those fictional scenes or even shots can sometimes be the result of linguistic manipulation as idiom misuse. Usually, the result of a pun, that situation is a play on the difference between the literal and the symbolic meaning of a word or phrase. Linguistic manipulation can even go further by the creation of a brand new metaphor.

10.1 Narrative comparisons

Narrative comparisons are common in the corpus; 26 % of the comparisons are narrative. Like the other devices, they are not used the same way nor to the same extent depending on the speaker. Samantha Bee is the one that makes the most use of it with 45% of her comparisons being narrative. However, most of the time, they relate to childhood. Bill Maher and Stephen Colbert use it in the same proportions, 24% and John Oliver use it less with 18%. This paper has already examined narrative comparisons with examples (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (11), (22), (23). Narrative comparisons stage a situation; they tell a story and create a fictional event.

(26) He's saying this is not about the Russia investigation in a letter firing Comey for the Russia investigation. That is clever. That is like carving your alibi on the murder weapon. Hold on one second "not donny's gun. I think the maid did it– Sad!" "build the wall!

Comparisons can also help create fictional situations to which the audience can relate. The Russia Investigation - as the media calls it - or the Russia Probe, the Russian Hoax, the Mueller Probe, and the Mueller report (after the special prosecutor appointed a few days after James Comey's Dismissal) was the FBI investigation into Russia's influence into the 2016 election. Donald Trump was not the target of those inquiries; his national security adviser Michael Flynn was. Previous to James Comey's dismissal, Donald Trump had asked three times, the FBI director to drop the investigation. However, Comey refused. It was from day one the reason for the man's dismissal. However, it was denied by Donald Trump and his surrogates for a few days; the dismissal letter

even rejected it. However, during a live TV interview, Donald Trump admitted that Russia investigation and its termination was the main reason why he decided to terminate James Comey's employment in the FBI. In this example, to paraphrase, Stephen Colbert compares mentioning the Russia investigation into the dismissal letter as writing one's name on the murder weapon. It implies that firing James Comey is as serious as committing murder, and the letter is the murder weapon. In this fictional situation often depicted on TV through true-crime shows (documentaries) or police procedural shows (fiction), the writers entail a few things. Donald Trump is defined as a murderer and not an incredibly smart one. The speaker then perceives the action as a crime.

The other important element in this comparison is the imaginary line given to the president: "Not Donny's gun. I think the maid did it – Sad!" "Build the wall!". It relates to several elements in Donald Trump's argumentative habits. He first denies something than accuse someone else, then changes the subject. The choice of the "maid" is also essential. Donald Trump grew up in a wealthy household with probably home staff, including maids, that he probably learned to despise. Also, a female employee. Usually, when accusing a member of staff of murder, it is often "the butler did it". However, here, fictional Trump uses the maid. It is probably a hint at the "he said, she said" routine he often uses when a woman accuses him of sexual harassment. He first denies it, and when that does not work, he goes further and accuses them of being after his money or fame. Sometimes even of being manipulated or paid by his enemies. This fictional (and humouristic) situation summarize Donald Trump's argumentative methods according to the satirists.

Narrative comparisons are only but one form of creative metaphor. The narrative structure, as in example (24), is not the only way language can be used to establish parallels. Idiom misuse is also a device used, although not as expected.

10.2 Idiom misuse

Language is one of the elements manipulated in the creation of a joke. In the case of idiom misuse, it is often a play on words that creates humour. In the following case, it is used within a narrative structure, as an image is created (quite literally) to get the point across. John Oliver is the only one in the corpus to use idiom manipulation. He does it in two utterances examples (21) and (27).

(27) That cannot be a good sign, a Fox News host not being able to hold his doubt for 48 hours. It's pretty much a canary in a coalmine. But at this point, Donald Trump is basically waist-deep in dead canaries.

It occurred after a Fox News host made the declaration that prompted example (11) downplaying the scandal. However, two days later, he admitted that he was wrong and that there were reasons to be worried. The Collins dictionary defines the idiom "a canary in the coalmine" as "something that acts as an early warning of a problem or danger". This idiom is more frequent in British English. It makes sense relating to John Oliver for he was born and raised in Britain. To understand the following sentence, it is essential to know where this idiom originates. It refers to the former practice of taking live canaries into coal mines to test for the presence of toxic gases. The illness, or more often than not, death of the canary would prompt extra caution or even evacuations. The idea of a dead canary is, therefore, a bad omen.

Idiomatic reading is the one that comes naturally to mind. Idiom misuse is a perfect link between cognitive linguistics and the S5TH. Language and verbal humour are culturally-based. The use of language is an essential part of humour culture. Therefore they are also usage-based. As we continue in our journey into the analysis of the idiom "a canary in the coal-mine", it is interesting to take a closer look at the Relevance theory when keeping in mind the precepts of frame semantics. The relevance theory (RT) suggests that the act of communication is purely voluntary and controlled. RT makes it clear that human beings draw interpretation that are relevant. It is even more so when concerning scripted language as in our corpus here. Both the Relevance Theory and the Incongruity Resolution Model have in common the Garden-path phenomenon, even though it does not point to the same event. In linguistics, garden-pathing refers to the general tendency for all listeners and readers to make increasingly confident predictions about the meaning of a sentence as it progresses. In joke analysis, a garden-path joke is one of the Forced-reinterpretation jokes. A second meaning to the utterance occurs to the hearer. The point in common between those two theories is Grice's cooperative principle, it is respected in the first case and violated in the second. Here we can talk about a pun. Puns involve the presence of at least two meanings but do not necessarily involve two words. The two senses can come about via the interpretation of any string as a result of syntactic, morphological or pragmatic ambiguity. Once two meanings have been brought together, the two senses may either coexist, one of the two may win out. The (usually lexical) unit that allows the two meanings to coexist is called a connector, while the section that forces the presence of the second sense is called a disjunctive. Connector and disjunctive may be distinct or not.

One of the most prominent promises of Donald Trump during his election campaign less than a year before was the relaunch of the Coal Industry. The idiom misuse here is explicit thanks to a graphic of Donald Trump waist-deep in dead canaries, which suggest that James Comey's dismissal

is just the new elements in a long list of red-flags.



Fig 10: Donald Trump waist-deep in dead canaries

Idiom misuse – or as is the case here, idiom reinterpretation - and narrative comparisons are a tribute to linguistic creation. Humour relies heavily on the creativity of the speaker and the ability for the audience to appreciate their product.

10.3 The creativity of humour

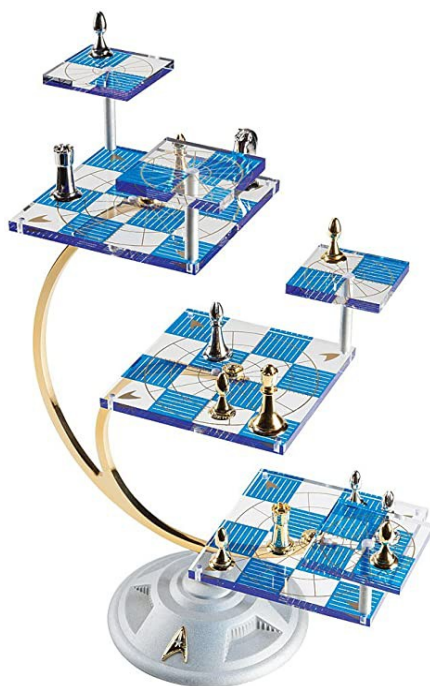
Several elements and devices can be combined in one utterance. Narrative comparisons are more often than not – within this corpus – referring to the world of childhood. Idioms are related to everyday life. In the following and last example analysed here, an idiom is the first step in the creation of a metaphor. The metaphor itself uses as a source, a game usually attributed to family nights and more specifically, to families with young children. This creative metaphor is from Stephen Colbert's show.

(28) He's not-- he's not--- he's not some puppet master. He's not some wizard playing three-dimensional chess. He's playing "hungry, hungry hippos". He's just slapping till he gets all the marbles. Mine, mine, mine, mine, mine!

Through this comparison, Stephen Colbert is commenting on journalists theories that Donald

Trump's actions result from a grand plan. To Stephen Colbert, Trump does not have a grand scheme. He acts on a whim day after day without worrying about the consequences. This metaphor is in three sections the middle section help link the first and the last one. In joke analysis, the first string would be the set-up, the last one the punchline and the middle-one the connector. In this case, it is a three-part joke. The first element "he's not some puppet master" rely on the idiom "puppet master". This phrase refers to a mastermind, a leader who uses manipulation to reach his goal. "Puppet master" in this sense suggest a cleverness and remarkable talent for strategy, therefore a certain capacity for anticipation. Those qualities are denied to Trump with the terms "he's not some".

The second element serve as a transition. The choice of the word "wizard" rather than someone, suggests someone magical as "Tinker Bell" or "Santa Claus" in previous examples. Someone, as the word "master" implies, with extraordinary gifts and a real power. "t=Three-dimensional chess" is an actual board game that demands strategies, a great memory, anticipation and skills of adaptation. It follows the rules of regular chess, but the board is divided into three large boards and four smaller ones on different levels which stop the players from seeing the whole game at one glance. This game usually relates to high IQ individuals with affinities for hard sciences. It was made famous by the sci-fi TV series *Star Trek*⁴⁸. However, the keyword here is "playing". The first element treats what the president is not, and the second at what the president is playing. The middle section treats both: he is not something playing at something. This middle section helps make the transition between the idiomatic expression and the source of the comparative structure.



48 *Star Trek* (TV series) from 1966 to 1969 and followed by a revival on TV in the 1990s and then on the big screen in the 2000s and 2010s.

Fig.11 Three-dimensional chess board as seen in the TV series Star Trek

The third element is "he is playing "hungry hungry hippos". In this game, four hippos are placed around a circle in which the players launch marbles. The goal of the game is to catch the most marbles by slapping the trigger on the hippos back. The trigger makes the hippos head extend to the middle of the arena. It is a game for young children or families with young children. No strategy is required, it is a dexterity game. "He's just slapping till he gets all the marbles" suggest that Donald Trump has no strategy at all and uses the most natural method ("slapping") to win the game, without worrying about the other players. It still relates to satirists rhetoric that Donald and his followers behave like children. The last part of the joke "Mine, mine, mine, mine, mine!" could be two things. First, it is an enactment of Donald Trump trying to get all the marbles while slapping, and the writers pictured him saying the word "mine" five times. He could also be a reference to the animation film *Finding Nemo*⁴⁹. In this film where a clownfish desperately swims from the Australian Great Barrier Reef to Sidney to look for his lost son Nemo, seagulls are represented as goal-oriented creatures always saying "mine, mine, mine" while fishing. This scene and the birds only line was the subjects of numerous memes⁵⁰ and gifs⁵¹ in recent years.

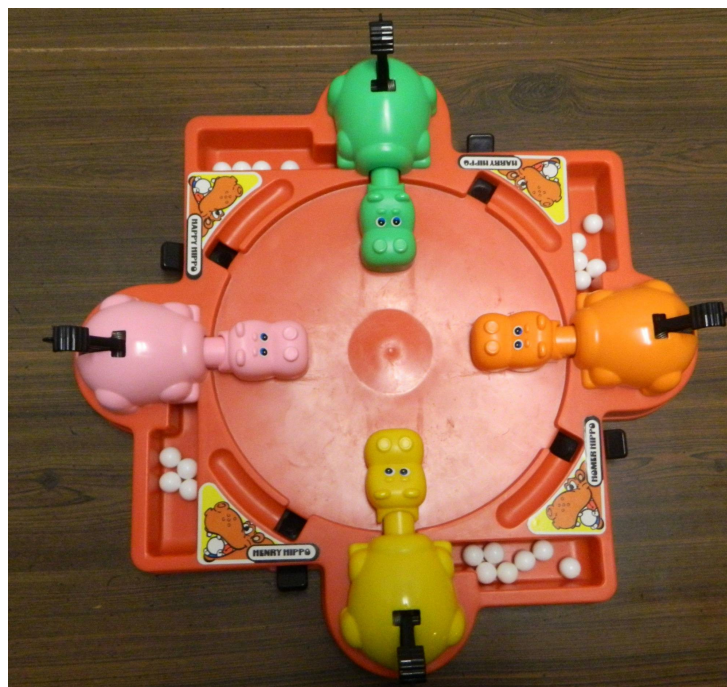


Fig.12: Hungry Hungry Hippos!

⁴⁹ *Finding Nemo* (2003) produced by Pixar animation studios and released by Walt Disney Pictures

⁵⁰ Internet memes (most commonly known as meme) are images paired with a catchphrase not necessarily linked with the original image. However, it is the case here.

⁵¹ Gifs are low-resolution short videos (up to six second) sometimes accompanied with texts inserted on the image. They are spread through social media as memes are.



Fig.13. Finding Nemo Seagulls meme

In this example, writers use language and its possibilities to not only create humour but also to share a perspective and a point of view offering visuals (mental or physical) to the audience.

10.4 Summary

Narrative comparisons, idiom misuse and creative metaphors have that in common that they manipulate language to create a new world where those phrase or situation make sense. Narrative comparisons create a parallel between a real case, the target and a fictional situation, the source. The fictional situation is usually perceived as ridiculous or embarrassing and serves as an emphasis on the absurd aspect of the situation or argument being commented. It is the case here with example (26) where James Comey's Dismissal is compared to a murder of which a fictitious Donald Trump is guilty. The fictional situation of a murderer carving his name on the murder weapon relates to Donald Trump admitting on live TV that he fired James Comey to stop Comey's investigation into Russian influence into his campaign. Idiom misuse play on people's knowledge of the language. The choice of the idiom is also paramount. Example (27) chose an expression which terms could help link John Oliver's arguments and Donald Trump's argumentative line. "Coal" is, in a way, a connector between the comparison here and Donald Trump's campaign. Creating a metaphor is also a way to make a connection where expressions were not available to do so. When language is limited, the speaker usually creates alternatives; it is a feature of human language and the main

feature of verbal humour. To describe Donald Trump's attitude as a president, in Stephen Colbert's mind, they were no metaphors available he then created one that fits his views towards the president's approach in example (28). However, he did not bluntly dive into it, but gradually presented and eased his audience into his perspective.

11. TOWARDS MODELLING SPEAKERS' STYLES

This chapter is an answer to the first one. The first section will serve as a summary of the main theories and items studied. The second will establish for each speaker the criteria inferred by those analyses, and the third section will expose the possibilities for future research.

11.1 Summary of this dissertation

This dissertation was divided into 11 chapters (including the introduction and the present chapter). The development, chapters 2 to 10, is also divided into three parts.

The first part treats generalities and goes from chapter 2 through 5. The leading theory of humour used as the backbone of this research is the Semantic Script Theory of Humour (SSTH) and its daughter, the General Theory of Verbal Humour (GTVH). Those two theories rely on the Incongruity Resolution model (IR). For there to be a discrepancy, a shift between two scripts has to occur. Frame semantics help explain how this shift can create incongruity. Humour bisociation and suspension of disbelief are also an essential part of the creation of humour they allow the satirist to create a universe to which to take the audience. Trust needs to exist between the comedian and the audience. This trust is established through presuppositions and implicatures. This trust breaks to create humour by violating two of the manner maxims of Grice's cooperative principle. However, humour does abide to rules: the Human Humour Rules that allow it to be different from banter or defamation. Those rules of humour, in general, protect the artists from legal actions against them. In the post-truth era, bias is essential for audiences and in particular, Millennials who look for "truthful" news, and it seems that to them, that means a personality that is not the mouthpiece of a TV channel but his own man (or woman). The satirist is a personality to be reckoned with. Whether it is personal, broad, explicit or implicit, satire has to both inform and entertain. Under the Trump administration, the alternative facts and the constant attack on the media by Donal Trump and his "surrogates" the satirist is the last line of defence. The journalist has too many constraints to be able to fulfil their goal. They are alone, do not have the time nor the resources to give news stories the attention they need and deserve. Satirists do have the means. Satirists are also true to their affiliation when journalists have to fake objectivity while defending their networks argumentative line.

The second part of this dissertation deals with the most widely used themes and systems in the corpus. The central idea is everyday life items, but this theme is not distinctive and was therefore not explored here. Television culture is a prominent theme, and the first that allows for a differentiation between the speakers. Political and historical references also depend on the speakers;

Those differences will be detailed in the second section of this chapter when the different speaker styles will be established. This part of the dissertation also explored the simple structures used by various speakers. Simple arrangements are straightforward comparisons that contain one source and one target; they differ in the number of characteristics. Simple comparisons consist of a source and a target and list one connecting criteria maximum. Even parallels list several criteria, more often than not, three. Simple name-calling are also straightforward and consist of one noun and a qualifier to help identify the target.

The third part relates to more complex structures and more in-depth comparisons. Name-calling can be simple or complex. Simple name-calling can stand on their own or be part of a sentence, but simple name-calling often includes both source and target. Comparisons can be uneven or multi-comparisons. Those two types of comparisons have similar structures: numerical imbalance in sources and targets. However, they differ in content. Uneven comparisons translate an imbalance between source and target, while the multi-comparisons attempt to banalise the target by multiplying the sources. Complex name-calling can blur the boundaries between comparisons and name-calling, especially when they relate to the world of childhood. Fictional characters written for children are also used to share a perspective on the complexity of Trump and his senior staff behind their childlike behaviour. The idea of children's doctrine can also be used by a satirist to share their point of view on Donald Trump's supporters. The creativity of language is in the service of humour when it comes to a fictional situation as in narrative comparisons. Language can also be manipulated. Idioms, in particular, can be misused or used as an introduction to creative metaphors. All those elements were the theoretical framework of the paper. Analysing those examples, following these frameworks allow for a sketch of a model identifying the speaker's style.

11.2 The speaker's style so far

Section 11.2 attempts to establish a style for each speaker. All four of them use both comparisons and name-calling; their selection depended on this very reason. They all operate in the US, are all left-wingers but not necessarily Americans. They all use every-day life as one of their main themes. Comparisons are also more widely used than namecallings. However, they differ in several ways. In this preliminary model, the most prominent features in each category for each speaker will feature and an explanation for why the importance or not of that use will be attempted.

11.2.1 Bill Maher

Bill Maher host of the *Real Time with Bill Maher*, as the other three, uses more comparisons than name-calling. In terms of themes, Maher seems to favour everyday life with 48%. However, as mentioned above, all speakers use that theme to a certain extent. In the second position, Bill Maher uses Historical and political references. However, he seems to favour political texts and recent ones as with examples (1), (2), and (19). Maher also prefers simple comparisons over other types, with narrative comparisons as the second most used device. He uses the five types of comparisons – even, uneven, multi, narrative and simple – to different proportions. For name-calling, he favours the simple form and usually uses one word with a qualifier as in (16). He uses children references in two examples, as in (25). It can be concluded that Bill Maher favours simple systems, everyday-life items and relatable topics.

11.2.2 Samantha Bee

Samantha Bee is the sole woman of this corpus and a foreigner. It seems to influence the choice of theme for she favours every-day-life items up to 58%. However, the difference with the other speakers is significant in her use of the comparative structures for out of five, Bee uses only two to almost equal forces: narrative and simple. She also favours simple structures when it comes to name-calling and uses children references. Her use of more everyday life references, narrative and simple comparisons and child folklore references suggest a more relatable style, appealing to a broader audience not necessarily as politically savvy as that of Bill Maher or John Oliver for example.

11.2.3 John Oliver

John Oliver is the sole European of the bunch (in the geographical sense of the term). It makes a difference in the use of a frequently British idiom in (27). However, even though like the others, he favours every-day life-items he makes almost equal use of historical and political references. He is the sole users of idiom misuse. As for the types of comparisons used, he uses the five of them for at least two utterances each even though he favours even parallels and simple comparisons. Where he differs from the others is in his use of name-calling, in terms of proportions and number of utterances he is far behind the others. His style is much more formal with only one reference to children with the generic word "baby" and no references to children folklore.

11.2.4 Stephen Colbert

Stephen Colbert is the only of the four to air on a public domain network, on a daily entertainment show (instead of a weekly political comedy show) and with a TV-14 age rating as opposed to a TV-MA rating. This last point explains why Colbert is the only out of the four that does not use a reference to sex. He is also the only one that does not favour every-day life references but TV and fictional references. His hosting an entertainment show could also explain it. As for the types of comparisons, he does use uneven comparisons, his targets and sources are always balanced. He favours even parallels and historical comparisons. He often uses several characteristics on which to base his comparisons. He is also the only one to prefer complex systems when it comes to name-calling (70%) and to use up to 8 utterances (out of 22) relating to the world of children. All those elements could be forced on him by the age of his viewers for complex name-calling as using references to children folklore are more formal and less hostile than simple name-callings as (16). Stephen Colbert has, therefore, a more teenagers-friendly style that favours simple, short (favouring name-calling over comparisons) and entertainment-based comparative structures.

11.3 Towards a humouristic identity model

Of course, this dissertation's attempt to establish a style for each speaker is not exhaustive. It relies on a relatively small corpus and limited devices – comparisons and name-callings. To determine what I dubb as a humouristic identity, a much larger corpus for each speaker is necessary. First, as isolated studies and then as a comparative one, could be useful. It would consist of listing for each speaker all the devices used when it comes to verbal language and not just to humouristic content. Other elements could be taken into account like the register, the lexicon, the rhythm, the prosody, the proportion information/entertainment, and humouristic and non-humoristic content. It would require more data. Perhaps it would serve a broader or more specific theory of humour and help create a humoristic identity model. This model could then be applied to other scripted humoristic contents. A model could be established for studying verbal humour in sitcoms, stand-up comedy and non-humoristic TV and web series to cite but a few possibilities.

APPENDIX A: EXAMPLES

PRIMARY CORPUS

- (1) Would you like a little banana with your Republic?..... 13
- (2) Because we now all live in Americaragua..... 13
- (3) former national security adviser – and Sam the Eagle cosplayer – Michael Flynn..... 14
- (5) our dumb democracy ran into a wall with a bucket on its head again..... 19
- (6) the attorney, acting Attorney General, fired; national security adviser? "you're fired!" FBI director? "You're..." Welcome to the Apprentice: Nuclear edition..... 42
- (7) I feel like I'm binge watching the fall of the Roman Empire set to the music from Benny Hill.. 42
- (8) "Or as Fox News put it, "James Comey resigns" easy mistake. Easy mistake. Obviously. It's easy to get things wrong on a breaking story. I mean, who can forget the "New York Herald's "Lincoln commits suicide." 44
- (9) he was in Los Angeles where he learned about his firing from a TV report, got on an SUV was slowly followed down the highway in a weird echo of the OJ chase, except not really because we know the president would never have fired his good friend "the juice" 44
- (10) This is what happens when you've abstained from your phone for nine days, you ejaculate just like that..... 46
- (11) He's talking to his viewers like a parent whose kids just walked in on them sixty-nining. "This isn't what you think this isn't what you're looking at, your mother and I were listening to see if there's an echo when you scream into a butt. Nothing is hapening here..... 46
- (12) Stupid Watergate: a scandal with all the potential ramifications of Watergate, but where everyone involved is stupid and bad at everything..... 50

- (13) I can explain our government to the people of Qatar: America is run by a group of powerful men, many of whom are very religious, doing whatever they can to protect their oil industry, I'm not sure you can relate.....51
- (14) Say what you want about Nixon, at least he wanted the fucking job.....52
- (15) Ignorance, chaos, hubris, suspicion and contempt, or as they're also known: Trump senior staff'.....52
- (16) President Batshit.....55
- (17) Comey's a bit of a turd but at least he is an independent one.....56
- (18) Press Secretary and original Boss Baby, Sean Spicer.....56
- (19) Trump fires the chief investigator into Russia, then he invites the Russians into his oval office the next morning, kicks out the American media, but has the Russian state-run press there, and confesses to obstruction of justice on live TV. But Hillary sent some emails from the wrong laptop.
.....57
- (20) Wait no politician has been treated worse! Abraham Lincoln was shot by an actor; William McKinley was shot by an anarchist; JFK was of course murdered by Ted Cruz's father; and James Garfield was shot then to find the bullet, and this is true, Alexander Graham Bell devised the kind of metal detector which didn't work, so doctors try to fish around in his guts for the bullet, with unwashed fingers which just made his infection worse, so he died in horrible pain. But yeah Alec Baldwin sometimes does mean impressions of you on TV! So yeah basically the same isn't it.....58
- (21) He is the least interesting human on earth. He is the person equivalent of an empty room painted eggshel. He's like a white bread sandwich where the middle is just a third slice of white bread.....59
- (22) Paper or plastic? That was me! I call a left turn a "louie". How's is it hanging? No one wondered how it hung before me. Chocoholic. You are the weakest link. Goodbye.....59
- (23) I think he was fired because Comey couldn't guess the name Rumpelstiltskin.....61
- (24) Trump without screaming mobs and Twitter is like Tinker Bell without clapping; he'll flutter to the ground and wink out.....64

(25) And the Pope made a fat joke about him and the French guy said he won the handshaking, he says 'you guys are mean to me now you get coal". What is it the Santa Claus doctrine?.....65

(26) He's saying this is not about the Russia investigation in a letter firing Comey for the Russia investigation. That is clever. That is like carving your alibi on the murder weapon. Hold on one second "not donny's gun. I think the maid did it– Sad!" "build the wall!.....68

(27) That cannot be a good sign, a Fox News host not being able to hold his doubt for 48 hours. It's pretty much a canary in a coalmine. But at this point, Donald Trump is basically waist-deep in dead canaries.....69

(28) He's not-- he's not--- he's not some puppet master. He's not some wizard playing three-dimensional chess. He's playing "hungry, hungry hippos". He's just slapping till he gets all the marbles. Mine, mine, mine, mine, mine!.....71

APPENDIX B: CORPUS STATISTICS

B.1 Comparisons and Name-Calling in the corpus

B.1.1 Individual videos

Video	Total word count	Com word count	Nbr utterance	Av word count	percent age	N-C word count	Nbr utterance	Av word count	percent age
BM0001	755	154	6	26	20,4%	18	3	6	2,4%
BM0002	821	151	7	22	18,3%	6	2	3	0,7%
BM0003	687	101	4	25	14,7%	19	2	10	2,8%
JO0001	4027	568	16	36	14,1%	39	3	13	1%
SB0001	714	140	7	20	19,6%	36	5	7	5%
SB0002	1053	102	4	26	9,7%	16	4	16	1,6%
SC0001	651	20	1	20	3,1%	36	3	12	5,5%
SC0002	1323	164	5	33	12,4%	24	2	12	1,8%
SC0003	1049	176	3	59	16,8%	19	2	10	1,8%
SC0004	688	111	4	28	16,1%	44	3	15	6,4%

B.1.2 Individual speakers

Name	Total word	Com word	Nbr utteran	Av word	Percent age	N-C word	Nbr utteran	Av word	Percent age N-C
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	count	count	ce	count	Com	count	ce	count	
Bill Maher	2263	406	17	24	17,9%	49	7	7	2,2%
John Oliver	4027	568	16	36	14,1%	39	3	13	1%
Samantha Bee	1767	242	11	22	13,7%	52	8	6	3%
Stephen Colbert	3711	471	12	36	12,7%	123	10	12	3,3%

B.1.3 Synthesis

Total corpus	Total word count	Bill Maher	John Oliver	Samantha Bee	Stephen Colbert
words	11768	2263	4027	1767	3711
Percentage word count	100,00%	19%	34%	15%	32%
Com word count	1687	406	568	242	471
Nbr utterance	57	17	16	11	13
Average per utterance	26	24	36	22	36
Perceptnage Com	14,3%	17,9%	14,1%	13,7%	12,7%
N-C word count	263	49	39	52	123
Nbr utterance	27	7	3	8	10
Average per utterance	9	7	12	5,8	12,3
Percentage word count	2,2%	2,2%	1%	3%	3,3%

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B.1.4 Comparisons and name-calling proportion for each speaker

	Bill Maher (24)		Samantha Bee (19)		John Oliver (19)		Stephen Colbert (22)		Total (84)	
Comparisons	17	71%	11	58%	16	84%	12	55%	57	68%
Name-calling	7	29%	8	42%	3	16%	10	45%	27	32%

B.2 Specificities

B.2.1 Main themes and their proportions for each speakers

	Bill Maher (24)		Samantha Bee (19)		John Oliver (19)		Stephen Colbert (22)		Total	
Sex	1	4%	1	5%	1	5%	0	0%	3	4%
History and politics	7	28%	5	26%	6	32%	4	18%	22	27%
TV and other fictions	5	20%	2	11%	5	26%	10	45%	22	27%
Everyday life	11	48%	11	58%	7	37%	8	37%	36	42%

B.2.2 Types of comparisons

	Bill Maher (17)		Samantha Bee (11)		John Oliver (16)		Stephen Colbert (12)		Total (57)	
Even	3	18%	0	0	4	25%	5	42%	12	21%
Uneven	1	6%	0	0	2	13%	0	0%	3	5%
Multi	3	18%	0	0	2	13%	2	17%	8	14%

Narrative	4	24%	5	45%	3	18%	3	24%	15	26%
Simple	6	34%	6	55%	5	31%	2	17%	19	34%

B.2.3 Types of Name-calling

	Bill Maher (7)		Samantha Bee (8)		John Oliver (3)		Stephen Colbert (10)		Total (29)	
Simple	6	86%	7	86%	2	67%	3	30%	17	59%
Complex	1	14%	1	14%	1	33%	7	70%	10	41%

B.2.4 Children themed example

The percentage of comparisons and name-calling is expressed against the total number of comparisons and name-calling for each speaker and not the total of utterance for each column.

	Bill Maher (24) (17 com / 7 NC)		Samantha Bee (19) (11 com / 8 NC)		John Oliver (19) 16 com / 13 NC		Stephen Colbert (22) 12 com / 10 NC		Total (84) 57 com / 27 NC	
Total examples	2	8%	2	10%	1	6%	8	67%	13	16%
Comparison	2	12%	1	9%	0	0	2	17%	5	9%
Name-calling	0	0%	1	13%	1	33%	6	60%	8	30%

B.2.5 Idiom misuse

	Bill Maher 17		Samantha Bee 11		John Oliver 16		Stephen Colbert 12		Total 57	
Idiom misuse	0	0%	0	0%	2	13%	0	0%	0	0%

APPENDIX C: POLITICAL AND NEWS CONSUMPTION STUDY

47 participants

C.1 Generalities

C.1.1 Age

-18	18-25	25-40	40+
	85 % (40)	15 % (7)	

C.1.2 Level of English – specialist (45 individuals)

L1	L2	L3	M1	M2	Over M2
11% (5)	27 % (12)	36 % (16)	13 % (6)	13 % (6)	

C.1.3 Level of English – non-specialist (2 individuals)

A1-A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
	50% (1)	50% (1)		

C.1.4 Sources of news on English speaking countries

Type of source (S)	Share
Newspaper(N)	74 % (35)
TV News (TV-N)	28% (13)
Social Media (SM)	94% (44)
Political satire : Newspaper (PS-N)	9% (4)
Political satire : Comedy shows (PS-TV)	51 % (24)

Other	9 % (4)
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For each each source, the share of other sources used in parralel

For each user of X how many use also Y

S	N	TV-N	SM	PS-N	PS-TV	Other
N		29 % (10)	91 % (32)	3% (1)	54 % (19)	11 % (4)
TV-N	77 % (10)		85 % (11)	8 % (1)	38 % (5)	15 % (2)
SM	73 % (32)	25 % (11)		7 % (3)	52 % (23)	9 % (4)
PS-N	25 % (1)	25 % (1)	75 % (3)		50 % (2)	50 % (1)
PS-TV	79 % (19)	21 % (5)	96 % (23)	8 % (2)		8 % (2)
Other	100 % (4)	50 % (2)	100 % (4)	25 % (1)	50 % (2)	

C.2 News personalities

C.2.1 News persons : most heard of

(S) : Satirist / (J) Journalist / UK / US

Name	Share	Country	Job
Anderson Cooper (AC)	26 % (12)	US	J
Bill Maher (BM)	13 % (6)	US	S
Jon Stewart (JS1)	34 % (16)	US	S
Stephen Colbert (SC)	47 % (22)	US	S
Lester Holt (LH)	6 % (3)	US	J
John Oliver (JO)	53 % (25)	US	S
Julie Etchingham (JE)	2 % (1)	US	J
Trevor Noah (TN)	43 % (20)	US	S

Rachel Madow (RM)	13 % (6)	US	J
Samantha Bee (SB)	13 % (6)	US	S
Don Lemon (DL)	2 % (1)	US	J
David Muir (DM)	6 % (3)	US	J
Jim Jeffries (JJ)	13 % (6)	US	S
Sean Hannity (SH)	4 % (2)	US	J
Nish Kumar (NK)	13 % (6)	UK	S
Jon Snow (JS2)	6 % (3)	UK	J
Huw Edwards (HE)		UK	J
Rachel Paris (RP)	9 % (4)	UK	S
Krishnan Murty (KM)	4 % (2)	UK	J
George Alagiah (GA)		UK	J
Russel Howard (RH)	30 % (14)	UK	S
None	11 % (5)		

*For each each news person, the share of other persons heard of in parralel
Percentage of people taht heard of X that have also heard of Y*

A

	AC	BM	JS1	SC	LH	JO	JE	TN	RM	SB	DL
AC		25 % (3)	33 % (4)	42 % (5)	17 % (2)	59 % (7)		59 % (7)	17 % (2)	17 % (17)	
BM	50 % (3)		67 % (4)	67 % (4)	17 % (1)	100 % (6)		33 % (2)	17 % (1)	33 % (2)	
JS	25 % (4)	25 % (4)		63 % (10)	19 % (3)	75 % (12)	6 % (1)	50 % (8)	19 % (3)	25 % (4)	6 % (1)
SC	22 % (5)	18 % (4)	45 % (10)		5 % (1)	64 % (14)	5 % (1)	50 % (11)	14 % (3)	27 % (6)	5 % (1)
LH	67 % (2)	33 % (1)	100 % (3)	33 % (1)		67 % (2)		67 % (2)		33 % (1)	

JO	28 % (7)	24 % (6)	48 % (12)	56 % (14)	8 % (2)			52 % (13)	16 % (4)	20 % (5)	
JE			100 % (1)	100 % (1)				100 % (1)	100 % (1)		100 % (1)
TN	35 % (7)	10 % (2)	40 % (8)	55 % (11)	10 % (2)	65 % (13)	5 % (1)		25 % (5)	15 % (3)	5 % (1)
RM	33 % (2)	17 % (1)	50 % (3)	50 % (3)		67 % (4)	17 % (1)	83 % (5)		17 % (1)	17 % (1)
SB	33 % (2)	33 % (2)	67 % (4)	100 % (6)	17 % (1)	83 % (5)		50 % (3)	17 % (1)		
DL			100 % (1)	100 % (0)			100 % (1)	100 % (1)	100 % (1)		
DM	17 % (1)		17 % (1)			117 % (1)		17 % (1)			
JJ	17 % (1)	17 % (1)	50 % (3)	67 % (4)	17 % (1)	50 % (3)		50 % (3)	17 % (1)	50 % (3)	
SH	100 % (2)	50 % (1)	50 % (1)	100 % (2)	50 % (1)	50 % (1)		100 % (2)	0	50 % (1)	
NK	67 % (4)	50 % (3)	83 % (5)	33 % (2)	17 % (1)	100 % (6)		50 % (3)	17 % (1)	17 % (1)	
JS2		33 % (1)	33 % (1)	67 % (2)		67 % (2)		67 % (2)		33 % (1)	
HE											
RP	75 % (3)	50 % (2)	100 % (4)	50 % (2)	25 % (1)	100 % (4)		25 % (1)		25 % (1)	
KM	50 % (1)	50 % (1)	50 % (1)			50 % (1)		50 % (1)	50 % (1)		
GA											
RH	43 % (6)	21 % (3)	43 % (6)	50 % (7)	14 % (2)	50 % (7)		36 % (5)	14 % (2)	21 % (3)	

B

	DM	JJ	SH	NK	JS2	HE	RP	KM	GA	RH	0
AC	8 % (1)	8 % (1)	17 % (2)	33 % (4)			25 % (3)	8 % (1)		50 % (6)	
BM		17 % (1)	17 % (1)	50 % (3)	17 % (1)		33 % (2)	17 % (1)		50 % (3)	
JS	6 % (1)	19 % (3)	6 % (1)	31 % (5)	6 % (1)		25 % (4)	6 % (1)		38 % (6)	
SC		18 % (4)	9 % (2)	9 % (2)	9 % (2)		9 % (2)			32 % (7)	

LH		33 % (1)	33 % (1)	33 % (1)			33 % (1)			67 % (2)	
JO	4 % (1)	12 % (3)	4 % (1)	24 % (6)	8 % (2)		16 % (4)	4 % (1)		28 % (7)	8 % (2)
JE											
TN	5 % (1)	15 % (3)	10 % (2)	15 % (3)	10 % (2)		5 % (1)	5 % (1)		25 % (5)	5 % (1)
RM		17 % (1)		17 % (1)				17 % (1)		33 % (2)	
SB		50 % (3)	17 % (1)	17 % (1)	17 % (1)		17 % (1)			50 % (3)	
DL											
DM											
JJ			17 % (1)	33 % (2)			17 % (1)			50 % (3)	
SH		50 % (1)		50 % (1)			50 % (1)			50 % (1)	
NK		33 % (2)	17 % (1)				50 % (3)	17 % (1)		33 % (2)	
JS2										33 % (1)	
HE											
RP		25 % (1)	25 % (1)	75 % (3)						25 % (1)	
KM				50 % (1)						50 % (1)	50 % (1)
GA											
RH		21 % (3)	7 % (1)	14 % (2)	7 % (1)		7 % (1)				7 % (1)

C.2.2 News persons : most watched

(S) : Satirist / (J) Journalist / UK / US

Name	Share	Country	Job
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Anderson Cooper (AC)	15 % (7)	US	J
Bill Maher (BM)	4 % (2)	US	S
Jon Stewart (JS)	15 % (7)	US	S
Stephen Colbert (SC)	40 % (19)	US	S
Lester Holt (LH)		US	J
John Oliver (JO)	38 % (18)	US	S
Julie Etchingham (JE)	2 % (1)	US	J
Trevor Noah (TN)	36 % (17)	US	S
Rachel Madow (RM)		US	J
Samantha Bee (SB)	13 % (6)	US	S
Don Lemon (DL)		US	J
David Muir (DM)		US	J
Jim Jeffries (JJ)	9 % (4)	US	S
Sean Hannity (SH)		US	J
Nish Kumar (NK)	11 % (5)	UK	S
Jon Snow (JS)		UK	J
Huw Edwards (HE)		UK	J
Rachel Paris (RP)	9 % (4)	UK	S
Krishnan Murty (KM)	4 % (2)	UK	J
George Alagiah (GA)		UK	J
Russel Howard (RH)	17 % (8)	UK	S
None	15 % (7)		

*For each each news person, the share of other persons watched of in parralel
Percentage of people wathcing X that also watches « Y »*

A

	AC	BM	JS1	SC	LH	JO	JE	TN	RM	SB	DL
AC		14 % (1)	29 % (2)	57 % (4)		57 % (4)		43 % (3)		29 % (2)	
BM	50 % (1)		50 % (1)	50 % (1)		100 % (2)		50 % (1)		50 % (1)	
JS1	29 % (2)	14 % (1)		71 % (5)		71 % (5)		57 % (4)		29 % (2)	
SC	21 % (4)	5 % (1)	26 % (5)			47 % (9)	5 % (1)	47 % (9)		21 % (4)	
LH											
JO	22 % (4)	11 % (2)	28 % (5)	50 % (9)				50 % (9)		28 % (5)	
JE				100 % (1)				100 % (1)			
TN	18 % (3)	6 % (1)	24 % (4)	53 % (9)		53 % (9)	6 % (1)			24 % (4)	
RM											
SB	33 % (2)	17 % (1)	33 % (2)	67 % (4)		83 % (5)		67 % (4)			
DL											
DM											
JJ	25 % (1)	25 % (1)	25 % (1)	75 % (3)		50 % (2)		50 % (2)		50 % (2)	
SH											
NK	40 % (2)	40 % (2)	20 % (1)	60 % (3)		100 % (5)		40 % (2)		40 % (2)	
JS2											
HE											
RP	25 % (1)	25 % (1)	25 % (1)	75 % (3)		100 % (4)		50 % (2)		50 % (2)	
KM			50 % (1)	50 % (1)							

RP		50 % (2)		75 % (3)						25 % (1)	
KM										50 % (1)	
GA											
RH		25 % (2)		13 % (1)			12 % (1)	13 % (1)			18 % (3)

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