39 Facts About Comedy - mental_floss on YouTube (Ep.209)

List Show
https://youtube.com/watch?v=iw9o2oSE7zA
https://nerdfighteria.info/v/iw9o2oSE7zA

Hi, I'm John Green. Welcome to my salon... uh-oh... well that's supposed to be a fire.

1. Well anyway, did you know that Mel Brooks once said "Tragedy is when I cut my finger. Comedy is when you fall into an open sewer and die." ?

Well that's the first of many facts about comedy I'm gonna share with you today. We're gonna talk about everything from comedians to sitcoms to movies to talk shows. So let's get started.

(Intro)

2. Most of the world-wide highest grossing comedy films are children's movies like *Toy Story 3, Frozen, The Lion King*. Three of the saddest comedies ever made. I mean, I don't think Simba thinks his life is a comedy. Is E. T. a comedy? But the three top grossing comedies that aren't kids movies are *Mamma Mia, Men in Black,* and the saddest comedy of all time *The Hangover Part 2.*

3. Speaking of the box office the 1997 film *Trojan War* staring Will Friedl and Jennifer Love Hewitt cost $15 million to make. It played in one theater earning a total of $309 from ticket sales.

4. But back to *the Hangover* briefly. In the first movie (the good one), Ed Helms really didn't have a tooth. He normally has a tooth implant there, because one never grew in. He just removed the implant for the movie.

5. The Big Lebowski has inspired his own philosophy / religion: Dudism, also known as the Church of the Latter Day Dude. According to its website, 200,000 people have been ordained as Dudist priests.

6. There are 399 curse words in *South Park Bigger, Longer and Uncut*. Believe it or not this is a Guinness World Record for animated films, even beating out *Beauty and the Beast*.

7. A film that could have also had a lot of cursing: *Home Alone*. Apparently Joe Pesci had a lot of trouble not swearing during filming. Director Chris Columbus encouraged him to use the word fridge as a stand-in curse. Fortunately we don't have that problem on the f****** Mental Floss, do we Marc?

8. That classic "I'll have what she's having" line in *When Harry met Sally* was Billy Crystal's suggestion. Director Rob Reiner loved the idea. It's actually his mother who says the line.

9. The Stanley Kubrick comedy *Dr. Strangelove* was originally supposed to end with a pie fight, but it got cut for a couple reasons, including the fact that the actors had so much fun filming it that they were smiling and laughing throughout the entire scene. But Kubrick later referred to the entire affair as "a disaster of Homeric proportions." I think you meant "Homeric pie-portions", Mr. Kubrick. Anybody? "Pie-portions"? Hm? Hm? Slices? No? All right.

10. It's always fun to picture what movie would be like if they had different stars. Here are a few examples: Mel Brooks offered John Wayne a role in *Blazing Saddles.* Wayne of course turned the role down, but allegedly told Brooks that he'd be first in line to see the film.

11. Johnny Depp, Jim Carrey, and Tom Cruise were all considered for the role of Ferris Bueller, which would have meant three very, very different movies.

12. And Betty White turned down a role in *As Good As It Gets* because of a scene in which Jack Nicholson puts a dog down a garbage chute. I wonder if Betty White would have accepted the role if they'd just pushed this puppy-sized elephant down the garbage chute.

13. All right, on to talk shows. During Johnny Carson's final *Tonight Show* in 1992, Comedy Central didn't air any programming. Instead, it showed a simple message: "Watching Johnny Carson's last show, and so should you."

14. That's the kind of thing they would never do now. By the way, the *Tonight Show* is the oldest talk show in the world that's still on the air, so, no pressure, Jimmy Fallon.

15. Speaking of Fallon, in elementary school he was voted "Most likely to replace David Letterman". So accurate, yet so inaccurate, like most elementary school superlatives.

16. Another thing about Jimmy Fallon: he is a picture book author, and his editor also edited the novel *The Fault in Our Stars.*

17. The first comic ever to appear on *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* was none other than Louis CK.

18. Alf, as in the alien life form from the eighty's sitcom, had his own talk show in 2004 on TV Land. It lasted for seven episodes. And you know what they say: "If you can't make it on TV Land, you can't make it."

19. The highest-paid late night talk show host is actually Jon Stewart. I bet it used to be Alf, but then his show got cancelled.

20. Let's move on to comedians. Kevin Hart did his first stand-up gig under the name "Lil Kev" which makes sense. He's not a tall man.

21. Chevy Chase signed up to be roasted on Comedy Central, but he ended up hating the roast so much that they don't air it anymore.

22. Anthony Michael Hall was the youngest-ever SNL cast member. He joined the show when he was just 17. Meanwhile, when I was 17, I ate Fruit Roll-ups for dinner.

23. In 2005, John Cleese auctioned off a piece of his colon. No context there, I'm just telling you.

24. Mike Myers was offered the role of Shrek at the premiere of *Saving Private Ryan.* He was actually asked to replace Chris Farley, who recorded most of Shrek's dialogue before dying in 1997.

25. While attending NYU, Aziz Ansari interned at The Onion.

26. And Bob Newhart's real name is George. Everything I've ever believed is a lie.

27. Steve Martin worked at Disneyland for eight years. He sold lassos in Frontierland and later moved on to Fantasyland, where he worked in Merlin's Magic Shop.

28. Tyra Banks wanted to be a sketch comedian. In fact, she took classes at the LA improv comedy troupe The Groundlings, and then she went on to make the comedy gold of course that is *Life-Size,* and also every elimination speech in *America's Next Top Model.*

29. I'm gonna finish up with some facts about sitcoms. Lucille Ball got pregnant IRL during *I Love Lucy* but CBS wouldn't let the show use the word "pregnant". They were only allowed to refer to her as "expecting".

30. In season one of the show *Roseanne,* corn is seen or mentioned at least once in every single episode.

31. In 1990 there was a British sitcom about Hitler titled *Heil Honey, I'm Home*. It was cancelled after one episode in a shocking turn of events.

32. The working title of the *Married... With Children* pilot was "Not the Cosbys".

33. And speaking of pilots, the original unaired pilot of *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* was created and shot for $200. The network FX saw it and bought the show.

34. Ellen DeGeneres turned down the role of Phoebe Buffay on *Friends.*

35. Comedy legend Richard Pryor wrote a few episodes of *Sanford and Son*.

36. Leave it to Beaver was created by Joe Conley, who was also responsible for *The Munsters,* which makes sense, because both shows are equally realistic.

37. The name "Barney Stinson:, AKA Neil Patrick Harris's character in *How I Met Your Mother* is the name of a heroin dealer in the book *LA Confidential.* It's widely believed that this is probably not a coincidence.

38. For the first season of *Scrubs* the janitor character was written as a possible figment of JD's imagination. Like, he doesn't actually talk to any other characters. But once creator Bill Lawrence realized that the show was going to last for, like, several seasons, he nixed the twist.

39. And finally I return to my still-fire-less place to tell you that, while most know *Seinfeld* as the show about nothing, that's only an idea that they talk about inside the show. According to Jerry Seinfeld, it was originally pitched to NBC as a show about how comedians get their ideas.

Thanks for watching Mental Floss here on YouTube which is made with the help of all of these nice people. Every week we endeavor to answer one of your mind-blowing questions. This week's question comes from "Lou 314" who asks, "Were there every any carnivorous plants large enough to eat mammals?"

Bad news, Lou, there still are. The carnivorous plant with the largest trap is a pitcher plant called *Nepenthes attenboroughii*. It was recently discovered in the Philippines and is named after David Attenborough, and, unlike other pitcher plants, which mainly live off insects, the Nepenthes attenboroughii specializes in rats. If you have a mind-blowing question you'd like answered, please leave it in comments. Thank you again for watching, and as we say in my hometown, don't forget to be awesome.