



American University of Armenia

Հայաստանի Ամերիկյան Համալսարան

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ARMCOMEDY

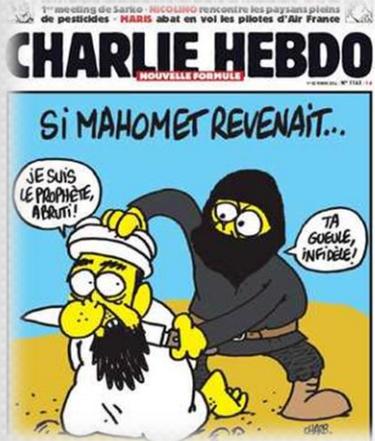
Armenian Political Satire & Political Awareness of its Audience

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What is Political Satire?

- “...amplifies the misconduct of politics by using humor to highlight the corruption or incompetence of government or political leaders.” (Poremba, 2008)

Examples



Functions

- Facilitation of outreach and mobilization due to humor
- Building culture of resistance and action among the citizens
- Setting a relationship between the citizens and the politicians
- Sørensen, 2014

ArmComedy

2009-Present



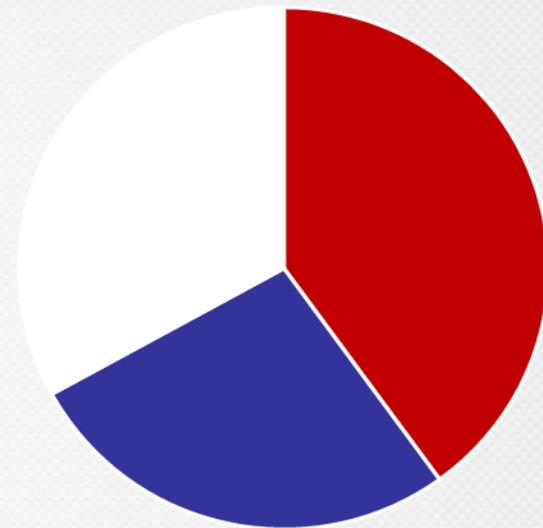
ArmComedy

- Stand-up shows (by 2009)
- Web-series on CivilNet (2009-2011)
- TV shows on ArmNews (2012-2015) and A-TV (2015-Present)

ArmComedy: target audience

- Viewers, followers
- Politicians

Audience



■ 18-24 years old ■ 25-34 years old ■ Other age groups

ArmComedy: main functions

- Does
- Restrain the politicians with humor
- Entertain the audience
- Create public pressure against the politicians

- Does NOT
- Create political discourse
- Raise political awareness among the passive segment of society

ArmComedy: main functions

Does

- Restrain the politicians with humor

Aram Manukyan, a member of Parliament, once made a statement in his speech while discussing a law with contradicting statements saying “do you want us to appear on ArmComedy again?”.

ArmComedy: main functions

Does

- Entertain the audience

The humor of a political satire needs to be beyond mere entertainment aiming to create a discourse and develop critical thinking for the sake of a healthy democratic culture.

ArmComedy: main functions

Does

- Create public pressure against the politicians

By discussing the flaws and shortcomings of Armenian politics, ArmComedy not only informs the public about these, but also targets the politicians and the government purposefully to create pressure against them for a positive change.

ArmComedy: main functions

Does NOT

- Create political discourse

The content does not create a discourse, because they concentrate on the surface of the issue only. E.g. on pre-electoral campaigns, March, 2017, they mocked politicians' outfit, the presentation of promotional video materials, and so forth, but there was very few of content and issue-wise discourse and critique on them.

ArmComedy: main functions

Does NOT

- Raise political awareness among the passive segment of society

The survey for this research proved that people, who have low political interest are not attracted to watch ArmComedy, which does not therefore raise their political awareness and political thinking.

Suggestions

- Thorough targeting their current and potential audience
- Create thorough discourse in their content
- Produce more interactive episodes
- Catch the important and make it funny rather than cover funny news only
- Go beyond entertaining and do more educating

Research methods

- Survey among the youth as the main audience of ArmComedy
- Interview with Sergey Sargsyan and Narek Margaryan – the hosts and founders of ArmComedy, and Nune Hakhverdyan – Communication Specialists in the Media Initiatives Centre in Armenia
- Content analysis
- Observations

Literature

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THANK YOU

Use your humor for a good purpose.