



# Humor, Comedy & Sketch Writing

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## **Humor, Comedy & Sketch Writing Ed Toolis**

All the hard-won lessons I've learned, over the years, about writing humor. This is the Best Time, in the History of the World, to Write Humor Multimedia Writing • And the Field is Still Wide Open • The Importance of a Writing Journal • Importance of Zen Questions • Samples of Multimedia Writing Comic Perspective & Humor as a Spiritual Quest to See the World in a Unique Way An Open Letter from All of Mankind • A Little Known Fact • What is a Comic Perspective? • Theories of Where Humor Comes from • Humor Style • Two Approaches • What to Look for Bottom Up Approach to Finding a Comic Perspective: Where Do Comic Characters Come From? • In the Types of Relationships • In Dysfunctional Relationships • in Character Flaw in Occupations • In Stereotypical Roles • with Circularity • in Inner Conflict • in Environments, Settings or Situations • in Reality TV Concepts Top Down Approach to Finding a Comic Perspective: with Theme and Story • form Books of Lists • in Self-Help Books • in Painful Truths Research & the Psychology of Creativity Advantages of doing research • Types of research - active and passive Research Brainstorming Lists: Getting the Most Out of Articles • Breaking Down a Broad Theme into Topic to Explore • Using Stereotypes in Self-Help Books to Create Material • Using Self-Improvement Articles to Create Comic Characters Sketch/Story Structure & the Social Psychology of “Memorable Moments” Humor is more dependent on proper structure than any other form of writing • Planning the Sketch or Story • Sketch/Story Structure • Beat Outline • The Game of the Scene • Advance Storytelling Types of Sketches or Stories Group Dynamics in Sketches • Types of Sketch “Plots” • Sketches Lifted from the Media • Sketches that Play with Time • Special Forms for the Theater The Writing Process Goals of Each Layer: For simple, 600-1500 words projects • For long, more complex projects • Revision and Self-Improvement • Pre-Sketch Brainstorming List • Uses of Subtext in Humor Characterization & the Social Psychology of Making Characters Come Alive on the Page & on the Stage First impression: Socioeconomic status • Setting and roles • Type of stereotypical characters • Temperament • Motivation Emotional Reactions: Changes in mood or attitude • Dialog tags in prose writing & parentheticals in sketch scripts • Body language • Looks • How words are said • Internal Monologue • Sketch structure, emotional musicality and character transformations • Why It's So Difficult to Get the Words to Come Out of Your Mouth the Way You Hear Them in Your Head • Body Language Styles of High & Low Status Characters Solo Sketch & the Social Psychology of a Great Conversation Writing in First Person • What is solo sketch? • The Social Psychology of a Great Conversationalist or Solo Sketch Structure • Types of solo sketch or journeys • Personality & Character Traits and What You Can Do with Them • The Interior Monologue and Doing Research on Yourself • Doing Character Studies • Performance Evaluation Checklist The Social Psychology of Satirical News Items Why Satirical Writing? • Forms of Satirical Writing • Turning News Items to Headline News Stories • Turning News Items to Stories • Recycling Current Events Humor • The Psychology of Publicity Stunts • A Current Events Brainstorming List

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