

My project for global studies was to watch a stand up special and comment on it through a Chinese person's perspective. I did some research, and I found out that jokes that make fun of others or lose face jokes are a big no-no. Making fun of others doesn't pass over well. However, depressing and ironic comedy is very successful in western and eastern culture. An example of a type of joke like this is sometimes on tea bags, it will say funny dark things like "achieved-absolutely-nothing black tea" and other cheeky sayings. Crosstalk is another very popular classic Chinese style of comedy and it is basically where they poke fun at gender roles and other controversial topics in a quick witted, but safe way. Unfortunately, due to censorship, crosstalk is pretty controlled in China. Crosstalk can be a duo or solo act. Cold jokes, which are not seen to be as funny in American culture, are very popular in China. With all this research gathered, I was ready to start watching and writing down a perspective write up.

Comments:

- Right off the bat he seems really funny and sarcastic.
- He used to be a doctor, and made some self-deprecating jokes about being a general practitioner.
- His wife is Vietnamese.
- He did a bit where he stared blankly, and in Chinese culture, having a lack of facial expressions while telling jokes is considered funny.
- He interacts with the audience a lot, especially in the beginning, asking people for their last names was a bit at the beginning, and there were many Vietnamese people there and they shared the same last name.
- He made a joke about the difference between Korean and Vietnamese people which went over well with the audience.
- He talked about The Hangover.
- He talked about how his strict Asian parents wanted him to be a doctor, and when he quit to pursue acting and comedy, he got no support, and it is a common stereotype that Asian parents want their children to be doctors or lawyers (I don't know if this is true, or if it's just a stereotype).
- He talked in Korean a bit when he was impersonating his parents, and that got lots of laughs.

- He talked about Asian parents a lot, and people in the audience seemed to take that over well. I think this joke would land because it is very relatable to their culture.
- He started doing a bit about Hangover stories. Which I looked at a review about the Hangover part III on the South China Morning Post, and they said that the movie made Asian people look stupid as well as pick fun at other minority groups. As well as killing of animals and showing heart attacks. I can conclude from this that this joke would not go over well in Chinese comedy.
- He makes subtle jokes about being rich like that he flew first class and that he lives in a gated community. I think that would go over well because I did some digging and other Asian American comedians have done bits commenting on why Chinese people love money.
- He made a joke about the Asian community and how they got backlash from the hangover movies about his role. I'm not entirely sure how this would go over, but I don't think it would be good, since according to the review, people in the Asian community were offended. He talked about this and said he did social justice in the hangover.
- He made some jokes about health issues, and I don't think this would go over well because since a review said they didn't like the heart attack scene and so I don't think they are very into health jokes, but then again, the review was done by one person, and even though comedy is subjective to culture, it is also subjective to personal opinions.
- He talked that people need to stop googling their symptoms before going to the doctor, and I think this would go over better than the other joke that was about a seizure, this was more of a witty joke and less of a story describing a health problem.
- He said Tom Hanks was his favorite actor, and when he met Tom Hanks, Tom asked him if his voice in the hangover was his real voice, which Ken thought was super funny. This may be a stretch, but it could play into Asian stereotypes and accents, because in the movie he had a very thick accent.
- He made a political joke about Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, which wouldn't go over well because the Chinese don't make political jokes, and he really got into this joke.
- He made quite a bit of political jokes poking fun at Obama and Clinton. He also did voice impersonations of Obama while telling the story of how he met Obama.
- He started picking fun at Trump as well. He said Asians are scared of Trump as well, and people laughed at that, however I don't know if this would go over well because he made another

joke about not wanting to get “me-tooed” by the president, and that makes fun of government officials and other people who used that as a statement about a serious problem, and the Chinese do not make lose face jokes or political jokes.

- He talked about creating a show with lots of Asian American people on television and people applauded him a lot. I think that people would be proud of the representation in their community, and Ken seemed proud and said it was one of his greatest accomplishments.

- He talked about Crazy rich Asians and how that was the first all Asian American cast and people celebrated that too.

- Side comment: he said that the director of Crazy rich Asians was directing his Netflix special right now, so I thought that was super neat!

- He talked about how comedians get ready for a show, which was very funny and a little sarcastic, which would land well because sarcastic humor is popular in Chinese culture.

- He did very little physical comedy, some in the beginning and some towards the middle and end. which wouldn't go over well because the Chinese community doesn't find physical humor that funny.

- Side comment: he talked about Fresh off the boat, which is a super funny show I recently started watching.

- He talked about being called a “model minority” and he said that was a lot of pressure and that he almost failed out of medical school three times. I think that's interesting and maybe plays to the stereotype that all Asians want to be doctors or a super smart job.

- He talked about his personal life a lot, and according to my research, they don't make jokes about their intimate lives. He talked about his wife a lot, and I don't think that is the kind of comedy that would go over well because he told stories about them hiking which is a personal life detail.

- Side note: his wife is a breast cancer survivor! I thought that was super awesome, she is so brave!

- In conclusion, this stand up special was really funny to me personally, however I think when it comes to Chinese comedy and culture, it's a bit of a mixed bag. I did realize, though, that American comedy is so much more different than Chinese style comedy. A lot of American humor is commenting on politics, and in Chinese comedy, that doesn't really happen. I also

found that not discussing too much of your intimate life is a no-no, because a lot of US comedians tell lots of personal stories.