The Humor of Superiority

My kind of humor is more of a blend and mix of several types such as superiority, aggression, identification, and irony. I like all types evenly, but only when mastered and blended perfectly. I definitely lean more towards superiority especially since a master of all types can be difficult to find. Superiority humor makes people feel better about themselves by ridiculing someone else or exposing something that is of low grade or low quality. Superiority humor can be used in a constructive manner, while it may seemingly give the impression that it is debasing someone else or thing. Complex forms of superiority humor, when properly constructed, can arouse thought and provoke changes in society.

Usually what gets my attention is when I can see or perceive that the comedian believes in what he is saying. It helps me to understand why he or she uses vulgarity as a form of expressing in a passionate way what they are saying. I like well-crafted jokes that poke or attempt to shake the foundation of establishments or groups that think alike. I also like jokes that have a philosophical spin on them. I do not mind if it degrades something that I already think is stupid; this tends to lend itself to political jokes often. However, I do tend to also enjoy constructive jokes that are not necessarily cynical in their approach, so I like both the dark and light types of superiority humor. Good examples are George Carlin’s jokes about building lavish malls to have people shop for garbage that they do not need, or about how people tend to have a problem with the homeless while there are all these huge golf parks littered all across the country.
that could be used to shelter many of them. He also mentions how golf is one of the most mundane and pretentious sports there is. I am sure that line of thinking offends quite a few, yet it is truthful by and large, as well as thought provoking. The ridicule involved in these jokes is how he makes the norm appear to be incongruent, and when one applies thought, not only is it funny but also rings true.

Another good example is how comedian Louis CK pokes fun at race by stating that he finds his being white a privilege, because he can travel back in time to any year. He explains how he does not have a problem getting a table at a restaurant in the year 2 A.D. This is hilarious due to the superiority humor of his race being better in an incongruent scenario. In addition, he is also adding levity to a known problem. Besides, he goes on to suggest that his race will have to pay this back somehow. What he is actually expressing here is that he is in agreement and has an understanding of social problems. He is building a relationship with his audience and gives them something to identify with. In a different skit, Louis pokes fun at some people’s sexual habits, expressing how preposterous it is for a woman to expect a man to push forward sexually even though she has already said no twice. He is adding levity to a situation in which some of us would use common sense but others might not. Also, at the same time, he is exposing an expectation that is not only outrageous but dangerous for both parties involved. In this example, he is also ridiculing a norm and presenting it as incongruent.

There are times I find myself at odds with what can be considered the “norm” or the common standard of things or thinking, and in those cases, in an effort to add levity as well as to de-stress, I will poke or joke about a situation with a family member or friend. Superiority and incongruity are very entertaining as well as useful to prove a point or to attempt to make someone else view things from a different perspective. I also see superiority humor as a form of
bonding and identifying with the other person. Incongruent mockery can break the seriousness of any given situation, and if two people who are arguing or are at a disagreement can laugh, then it can help to make things copacetic again. Another kind of incongruity I employ at times is an exaggeration of reality which borders on silliness. This tends to make other people laugh and can, in a small way, change a point of view. I find that superiority humor can have a positive effect during stressful situations and can aid communication on a one-to-one basis, or on a one-to-large scale basis, like the humor of many great comic legends of the past whom I admire.