

“FILL YOUR VOID WITH FREUD”

**by D.C.Benny
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I have always been fascinated with psychology. In high school, I had wanted to be a psychologist, until the psychology teacher pulled me aside and told me I should do something else that involved being funny because I was not suited for such a serious profession. It broke my heart. I had no idea that there was no room for being funny in psychology.

Now I've found that the same principle is true in the business of comedy. Being funny has nothing to do with being on TV or in films; a topic that I discuss frequently with my shrink. Who actually is pretty funny. I hope my high school teacher has cancer of the balls for steering me into this insane way to make a living which has nothing to do with making people laugh like I once thought it did. Maybe it did once, but now it seems to be based on having a spiky haircut, a quirky point of view, and having an agent with a spiky haircut and a quirky point of view.

Oddly enough, I ended up marrying a psychologist and this combination of professions seems to interest people almost like they are waiting for the car accident to happen. She also is funny, and we both get to live vicariously through each others bizarre professions without actually experiencing the downsides. She isn't going to feel the sensation of bombing and having a room of strangers hate you with passion and I will never know what it's like to be paid to listen to a weekly

“Aliens-in-my-head” story (although late night on the A-train, I can usually hear one for free).

Our backgrounds are as different as our professions; she is African-American from a family of financially successful doctors, while I am a Jew whose artist parents were always broke. Across the board, it was a difficult sell to the respective parents. Mine had a mistrust of anyone in the medical profession “digging in your head” and hers categorized the job of stand-up comic somewhere between “lazy” and “likes to make nice things out of clay”. The parents liked us, but didn't understand what made us tick.

There was so much friction about the who, how, what, and where, of our wedding that we decided to get married in ANOTHER COUNTRY, BY OURSELVES. Then when we came back, both sets of parents could do their own receptions the way they wanted them. We got married in Greece, came back and the two receptions were unleashed. At her parents, my mother got drunk and jumped into the pool with all her clothes on while the guests looked on in horror. At my parents, an opera singer friend brought over a big plate of homemade pesto that everyone loved until they discovered that instead of basil, he had used marijuana as a prime ingredient. Fortunately, no-one had a bad reaction, and there were plenty of doctors in the house just in case.

People always tell me they think a Jewish comedian being married to a black psychologist would be a great TV show. Unfortunately, none of these people have spiky hair and work at a network. It's always people like the guy I buy slices from, or the building super. No one named Ira whose only exercise is to write checks for new show ideas. I performed at the last Montreal Comedy Festival, a plac

where comics get to “show-the-show” to the networks. I did the whole sitcom set; “Here is me, here is my wife, here is my family, here is our life”. People laughed. But when it was all said and done, Ira was not in the building that night. The next day, either Variety, or the Hollywood Reporter announced: “The Sitcom is dead”. What perfect timing! After 12 years of trying to get into this festival to “show the show”, no-one wants the show shown, unless it takes place in a house, or on an island, with voting, scheming, and the eating of fists-full of worms. And a wildcard and some bachelors. With a sprinkle of someone being secretly gay. When I returned from Montreal, my wife said: “So, how'd it go?”

“People laughed, but the sitcom is dead”. “Says who?”

“Ira”.

“So now what?”

“Back to the same stuff I was doing before; clubs, road, etc.”

“So you are not going to be famous and have a corny, overly-censored, mainstream t.v. show with no creative control. I guess there won't be any stalkers, groupies, fair weather friends, and a drug problem before some random lawsuit takes away everything you own, after your show gets cancelled and your marriage gets ruined by accusations of pedophilia. But you still get to make people laugh and get paid for it right?”

“Yeah”

“And that is what you got into this for, right?”

“Yeah”

“So your dream came true. Now stop bitchin' and eat your chitlins, cracker. And after dinner it's gonna be time to take care of some “bidness”. I got lonely when you were away and read a little Freud. You know what that does to my id.”