

Ashwin Sivagaminathan

Ms. Small

Humanities

13 December 2024

Evil, Effeminate, and Gay

They're turning the frogs gay! Although this outcry stated by notorious Republican figure Alex Jones may not be widely respected in the conversation of the political landscape of the United States, true criticisms against the Democratic party do exist. Some of these are serious, while others are satirical, across many forms of media. One of the most popular avenues of communicating satire is YouTube, with channels like *The Babylon Bee* being giants in the world of American conservative satire. However, not every video they have created is effective in convincing Democrat viewers to join their side. In "Satan Devastated After Kamala Loses Election," *The Babylon Bee* fails to satirize the Democratic party due to an overtly blunt portrayal of the subject while also mistakenly pointing out one of its own flaws.

Due to an immediate crossing of the line of consent and a lack of any kind of buildup, the piece is ineffective at getting Democrats to believe that they need to change their behavior. At the start of the video, a bald, red man with devil horns sits down in front of a microphone, while drinking Bud Light out of a straw. To ensure that a Democrat audience would be aware that they are the subject of the satire, the background is entirely blue, with even the American flags being tinted this color. Also, the man is wearing a "Harris-Walz" hoodie and is sitting in front of three microphones labeled "abc", "CNN", and "MSNBC", three left-leaning news stations. Immediately, this portrayal comes across as offensive to any Democrat. The use of reduction by comparing Democrats to Satan is too quick and outright. In Christianity, the religion followed by

most Americans as well as *The Babylon Bee* itself, Satan is the ultimate figure of evil. Therefore, this comparison breaks the line of consent of the piece before anyone has even spoken by painting the Democratic party in an evil light. Additionally, the choice of caricature used is another jab at Democrats. Satan drinks the can of beer out of a straw, which is used to imply that Democrats are less masculine, as they cannot just drink it directly out of the can. Moreover, the selection of Bud Light makes another statement, as recently, Bud Light became notorious for running an LGBTQ+ representative ad campaign. This caused many conservatives to boycott Bud Light and ridicule anyone who drank it, calling them gay. Thus, this initial frame of the video already ascribes labels that most Democrats would not want upon themselves, calling them evil, effeminate, and gay. Because the piece delivers an immediate attack without any context, it fails to appeal to Democrats and would instead cause them to become defensive.

The satirical devices used throughout the video are not sufficient to distance the audience from the vice that is being targeted. Most effective pieces of satire rely on techniques such as irony or reduction ad absurdum. These techniques work because they allow the audience to question their own beliefs while not directly attacking them. On the other hand, invectives, obscenities, or other abrasive devices must be used much more sparingly to avoid offense. Unfortunately for *The Babylon Bee*, this piece fails to strike such a balance. For example, when describing why the Republican party won the 2024 election, Satan says, “Their side, they had the truth, the Constitution, they have prayer” (*The Babylon Bee* 1:12). Here, Satan is simply admitting that the Republican party is morally superior. He does not use any wit to convey this, and he does not allow the audience to think for themselves. Towards the end of the video, he adds on to this sentiment, saying “but for real, we are actually coming for your children” (*The Babylon Bee* 3:12). Even though the goal of a satire is to persuade, it must be done in a roundabout manner such that the audience does not feel as though they are being spoken down

to. It would have been possible for *The Babylon Bee* to use a tactics such as verbal irony or rhetorical questions in these cases to subtly imply the superiority of the Republican Party, but they failed to do so. The invectives that are used are not balanced with enough satirical fluff to soften their blows. This results in a message that is poorly received, as it is far too open for the audience to be willing to engage.

In fact, the only example of irony in the entire video is unintentional and directly conflicts with the video's message. When Satan is discussing the future of the Democratic party, he says, "we'll keep trying to convince everyone that Trump's Hitler" (*The Babylon Bee* 1:53). At first, one might think that the intended message is a fair criticism of Democrats. Regardless of one's opinions on Donald Trump, one would be able to see that he is not on the same level as Adolf Hitler, leader of the Nazi party who committed genocide on millions of innocent people. Therefore, Democrats who conflate Trump with Hitler are illogical, and this satire would be right to point out such a stretch. However, *The Babylon Bee* has unfortunately fallen victim to itself by creating an instance of situational irony. If comparing Trump to Hitler is illogical, so is comparing Democrats to Satan. If anything, the latter would be an even worse comparison, as the Democratic party is a large group that cannot be generalized upon as a monolith, while in Christianity, Satan is the root of all evil and thus must be worse than Hitler by definition. Because of this, they would realize that the comparison made in the video is even more extreme than the comparison that Democrats supposedly make. A Democratic audience would realize that this video is what it criticizes and thus reject its message.

In sum, this video fails to satirize the Democratic party and even backfires upon itself. It calls out an illogical reduction yet employs a similar one to an even more extreme degree. Besides that, the techniques it intends to use fall flat because they involve too much offense and not enough wit. Common satirical techniques such as irony are nowhere to be found, and *The*

Babylon Bee instead opts for harsher techniques that cannot work on their own. Even from the very first frame of the video, they start on the jabs without any exposition. Had it not been for such blunt methods, this video may have been more effective in convincing Democrats that they are wrong.

Work Cited

The Babylon Bee. "Satan Devastated after Kamala Loses Election." *YouTube*, 12 Nov. 2024,
www.youtube.com/watch?v=sncGpcfC2eg. Accessed 12 Dec. 2024.