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Hazardous Humor

What's the line between being funny and being offensive? In the last few years, there have been big named comedy TV shows, movies, or comedians themselves called out for making inappropriate jokes that seemed appropriate to say but weren't. Louis CK appeared on SNL's 40th anniversary episode, and made stand-up jokes on stage near the end of the episode. He wrote all the jokes himself, and he chose to make a few child molestation jokes towards the end of his sketch. By making these jokes some people feel like it is appropriate to repeat because they saw a person make the joke on tv. Even though these jokes are turning a serious situation that might have happened in someone's life(child rape), into a joke, that is not taking the event seriously at all.

Louis CK is known for his edgier comedy, so something extra was already expected of him when he was scheduled to appear on SNL, but this was a little over the line. Louis made a few specific jokes about the fact that when he was a child a child molester lived, and was caught in his neighborhood. He made jokes saying, "the man liked other boys but not me, I felt kind of bad," but also jokes comparing their love of kids to his love of Mound chocolate bars. He also was saying that, "It must be amazing if they are willing to risk so much for it," referencing a child molester's love for children, which didn't go over that well with the crowd. While some of

the crowd laughed at the jokes, most of the crowd didn't find it funny(around half the crowd making some type of noise like a groan to show their thoughts, or just sitting silent). While some people may not have liked the jokes, there were some people that still found the jokes funny. *The Hollywood Reporter* (an internet drama reporter), found people on Twitter calling it, "The unfunniest, most offensive *SNL* monologue," and another person saying that her, "heart aches for humanity," because of the monologue. *The Hollywood Reporter* also found some people on Twitter who enjoyed the monologue, one man calling it, "another great set," from SNL.

Louis may not have been advocating for child molesters, but he was still poking fun at the topic, and making it seem more "appropriate" to make those jokes which is not alright. Child sexual assault is a serious issue that affects a large amount of people across the world, and is a serious/delicate topic to a lot of people. The topic of Child sexual assault is in turn, not exactly a topic that should be joked about. Yet Louis making those jokes makes them seem more appropriate, which is the complete opposite of what should be thought about that topic. Someone seeing a famous person make these jokes on tv might think the jokes are appropriate, knowing that most inappropriate things are censored on tv.

These jokes have not been, and should not be seen as appropriate, which also brings up the question about Louis CK decided it would be appropriate to make the jokes he did about child sex abuse? As time has gone on, society has made it easier for someone to report them being sexually assaulted as a child, but there is still no way to determine a fully accurate number of how many children are sexually assaulted annually. Louis may have not been thinking about today's standards while writing the joke, but been thinking about his experiences as a child, where it may not have been as common for someone to report a case of sexual abuse. In Louis'

mind, the joke may have been appropriate from the experiences he has had with reporting child sexual abuse.

Even though Louis is not trying to advocate for child sexual abuse, he is still breaking down progress that has been made by making child sexual assault jokes seem appropriate. While Louis CK should not be severely punished, child molestation jokes are not appropriate, and hopefully he will take this as a lesson to be less offensive with his jokes. If people start finding messed jokes appropriate, what's stopping them from trying to make other more offensive jokes appropriate, and offending even more people. That could start a landslide of jokes being made appropriate, that are actually very offensive to many people.

Works Cited

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(Easybib wasn't letting me make the MLA form without paying for an account, sorry)