

Rajiv Satyal - *The Funny Indian*
Your High-Brow, Fun-Size Comedian

Rajiv Satyal is the small, bespectacled Indian guy from Ohio whose witty, universal, and TV-clean act resonates with Middle America by covering everything from racial issues to soap bottles to his favorite topic - himself.

Rajiv was born and raised near Cincinnati, Ohio. Unlike most comics for whom tragedy + time = comedy, he's just a little guy with a lot to say. His childhood was a blast, given his fun-loving parents and his hysterical brothers. He became funny in 3rd grade, influenced by his uncle and a friend who insisted he'd never make laugh. His interest in entertainment was likely subliminally influenced by the hobbies of his family: his Mom, a singer; his Dad, a DJ, one brother a singer, writer, and actor; the other a sportsman and speaker; his aunt, a painter and poet; not to mention his Dad's family's making of Bollywood films.

Despite sprouting a moustache in elementary school and not breaking 100 pounds till his senior year in high school, he somehow glided through childhood without being picked-on. A friend would later comment, "Sounds like God picked on you enough." Rajiv wanted to be Class Clown, but the guy who won was on the 5-year high school plan, so he had to settle for being Class President. A dork who managed to have cool friends, his 11-year Perfect Attendance record was solely driven by not wanting to miss out on a day's worth of stories.

Rajiv went to college and noticed, for Indians, the part of the form that allows you to choose your major was grayed-out to "pre-med." He finally graduated in Materials Engineering, which he figured was good for, well, material. While in college, Rajiv dabbled in everything from politics (interning on Capitol Hill in 1999) to comedy (winning The Funniest Person in Cincinnati amateur contest). Rajiv ironically "got serious about comedy" in 2002. In June 2005, he won The Funniest Person in Cincinnati contest in the semipro/professional division on his first try.

Upon graduation, he worked at the world headquarters of Procter & Gamble, in the purchasing, media, and marketing departments. He performed (and still does) at many P&G and other corporate events and had his own column in P&G's [Home Made Simple](#) newsletter, which reached 15 million US households. Occasionally, Rajiv was seen doing actual P&G work.

He has since opened for many nationally-renowned comics, including [Dave Chappelle](#), [Kevin James](#), and [Kevin Nealon](#). Rajiv has opened for [Russell Peters](#) in sold-out auditoriums across the U.S.A. In fact, in December 2006, an Indian newspaper asked Russell to name "comics to watch" - he named only two in the States; Rajiv was one of them.

Rajiv was often heard on various Cincinnati radio stations, seen in many local newspapers and magazines, and found onstage regularly as an MC and a Feature act at Midwest comedy clubs and colleges. Rajiv turned 30 in March 2006, at which point he freaked out, realizing that while he had done all he could do to gain unique experiences in Ohio - from selling knives to telemarketing to being a tennis ball boy - he had still lived in OHIO his whole life. So, he packed up and moved to LA and is now a full-time comic. Rajiv is in the rare position of hoping he makes it in entertainment so he doesn't have to go back to that six-figure gig with health benefits and job security.

This pocket pundit is a comedian who stands on the fringe of what is acceptable and challenges people to see a new point-of-view. You certainly don't come to Rajiv's shows to escape - you come to experience. Because he was raised when the anthem of the time for minorities was assimilation, the Indian influence had very little impact on his life. Now, he is trying to get in touch with his roots, if for no other reason than to deliver for the Indians and non-Indians who expect him to be more "Indian" - even though he's really just an Ohioan. And to be able to explain that Indians were not involved in 9-11 - just 7-11.

The act takes the audience on a journey, while conveying a key message of diversity, which helps to break down stereotypes: *We're all different and we're all the same*. Rajiv thinks that with each person who learns to assume the best about others, we can make the world a better place. Sound lofty? It is. Can he do it? We'll see. And in case you're wondering, he did make that 3rd grade friend laugh. So, Rajiv thinks he can do anything. At the end of the day, he talks about what it's like to be Rajiv. And we all have some Rajiv in us, even if we don't want to admit it.

You can find Rajiv acting in commercials, doing improv, on *Bill Bellamy's Who's Got Jokes?*, XM and Sirius Satellite Radio, co-headlining the Hindu-Muslim comedy tour "Make Chai Not War," and online managing comedic content for DesiYou.com, admiring himself on his Funny Indian Fan Club on Facebook, or at <http://www.myspace.com/funnyindian> and www.funnyindian.com, where you can view clips, read his blog, and subscribe to his podcast (also available in www.iTunes.com).