

## Satirical celebrity ad targets insurance industry, may miss mark

by Juana Summers  
U-Wire Content

Hollywood stars are making the debate over health care reform a little less serious and a little more viral, but it may not be hitting its mark.

Comedian Will Ferrell and a group of actors released a satirical video Tuesday that mocked health insurance industry executives.

The video was released by MoveOn.org, a liberal political action group and “Funny or Die,” Ferrell’s video Web site. In it, Ferrell along with *Mad Men*’s John Hamm, House’s Olivia Wilde and *Heroes*’ Masi Oka, pretend to support ailing industry executives.

As the video begins, Hamm says that “something terrible is happening,” and goes on to describe the “bum rap” that health

insurance executives have gotten during the brutal debate over reform.

Other cynical jabs include, “Insurance companies need our support because they keep our selfish priorities in check when we can’t.”

Ferrell asks, “So why is Obama trying to reform health care when insurance companies are doing just fine making billions of dollars of profit?”

Since its release, the video has been viewed more than 1.5 million times on the Funny or Die Web site and distributed on social networking Web sites and Twitter.

The format of the ad, the celebrity roster and its online-only delivery suggests that this call to action could be targeting younger voters. But while younger viewers find the ad funny, it might be missing its mark.

University of Missouri senior Yantezia Patrick labeled this approach “witty, but not effective,” after watching it.

“This isn’t a new approach to criticiz-

ing politics, policy or anything else that has caused community uproar,” Patrick said. “There’s not even slight irony that celebrities who have little to no concern about affording healthcare for themselves or their families find the metaphorical stomping of insurance companies on the ‘little guy’ unfair.”

Other students wondered whether this was just another voice adding to the debate, without an effective call to action.

Senior Lindsay Eanet said she supports the “use of humor to appeal to reason,” but wonders where the ad’s creators got their facts.

The video was released Tuesday, as the debate over health care reform continues.

That same day, the Senate Finance Committee met to begin hearings on the healthcare overhaul bill proposed by Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont. That bill does not include the public health option, but does include provisions to make health insurance less costly for lower income Americans.

## Book Review: Zombies breathe new life into ‘Pride and Prejudice’

by Jessica Kokesh  
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In the steadily growing selection of books based on the works of Jane Austen, “*Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*” by Seth Grahame-Smith certainly stands out from the rest. If the title and the zombified cover don’t grab your attention, then Grahame-Smith’s update of Austen’s famous first line certainly will: “It is a truth universally acknowledged that a zombie in possession of brains must be in want of more brains.”

Released this year, “*Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*” is the first of several classics with a supernatural twist being released by Quirk Books, and Grahame-Smith stays faithful to Austen’s original tale, even with the insertion of the living dead.

The story begins in the village of Meryton where a plague has swept the countryside, and the dead are coming back to life. Mr. Bennet has trained his five daughters in combat to keep the village safe from the “unmentionables,” while Mrs. Bennet

eagerly tries to marry them all off.

Determined to rid the earth of the zombie menace, Elizabeth Bennet has no interest in her mother’s plots – until she meets Mr. Darcy, a handsome but arrogant zombie slayer. Soon Elizabeth and Darcy engage in a battle of wits, manners and bloody combat as they overcome their differences.

“*Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*” is a fun, gore-filled look at Jane Austen’s England. Who knew all “*Pride and Prejudice*” was missing was a few ninjas and the Bennet sisters beheading zombies left and right? Grahame-Smith is witty and inventive within the constraints of Elizabeth and Darcy’s world. He manages to keep the characters consistent with the original while adapting them to his zombie-infested universe.

Fans of Austen might be shocked by some of the liberties Grahame-Smith does take with characters like Mr. Collins and Mr. Wickham, but it’s nothing those characters don’t deserve.

The prose is light and fun, and Grahame-Smith’s dry humor will make readers laugh

out loud in several spots.

For zombie fans, there is plenty of knock-down, drag-out fights between the characters themselves as well as the zombies, and there’s no shortage of gore to go around. The first zombie attack occurs 14 pages into the book, and they continue on from there.

One of the few problems with “*Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*” is that there’s less deviation into the zombie world later in the book. Some sections feel as though Grahame-Smith gave up adapting it half-way through, and these sections lose the momentum and fun of the rest of the book. Thankfully Grahame-Smith recovers in time to write a fantastic final confrontation between Lady Catherine and Elizabeth and deliver a good read for a Saturday afternoon.

If you had trouble getting through “*Pride and Prejudice*” before, pick up a copy of “*Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*.” It will keep you entertained while staying true to the heart and soul of Austen’s original classic.